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**CULTURAL FELLOWSHIP**  
**IN INDIA**



# **CULTURAL FELLOWSHIP**

**IN INDIA**

**By**

**ATULANANDA CHAKRABARTI**

**FOREWORD By**

**SIR SARVAPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN, Kt.**

**INTRODUCTION By**

**DR. M. A. ANSARI**

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## ABBREVIATIONS

- A. A. = Ain-i Akbari.  
A.-B. I. = Al 'Biruni's India edited by Sachau.  
A. V. = Atharvaveda.  
Br. Ak. = Bṛhadāranyaka.  
Br. S. = Brahmasūtra.  
C. H. I. = Cambridge History of India.  
Chnd. = Chhāndogya.  
Cm. = Commentary.  
E. H. I. = Elliot's History of India.  
E. I. = Encyclopædia of Islam.  
Fa. = Firishta.  
J. A. S. B. = Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.  
J. R. A. S. = Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of  
London.  
J. B. R. A. S. = Journal of the Bombay Royal Asiatic  
Society  
J. P. C. = Joint Parliamentary Committee.  
Kn. = Kena.  
Kt. = Katha.  
M. A. Ed. = Maulavi Muhammad Ali's Edition.  
Mdk. = Maṇḍuka.  
Mdka = Māṇḍukya.  
Mbh. = Mahābhārata.  
O. S. T. = Original Sanskrit Texts edited by Muir.  
Qrn. = Qur'an.  
R. M. = Religion of Man by Rabindranath Tagore.  
R. R. T. I. = Religious Reconstruction and Thoughts of  
Islam by Sir Muhammad Iqbal.  
R. T. C. = Round Table Conference.

R. V. = R̥gveda.

Sm. = Saṃhitā.

Sp. Br. = Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa.

S. S. = Sarvadarśaṇa Saṃgraha by Cowell.

St. = Śvetāsvatara.

S. V. = Sāmaveda.

Tait. = Taittirīya.

Up. = Upaniṣada.

V. P. = Vāyupurāṇa.

Y. S. = Yogasūtra.

Y. V. = Yayurveda.

### Transliterations

a = अ

ṛ = ऋ

ā = आ

s = स

d = द

ś = श

ḍ = ढ

ṣ = ष

i = इ

t = त

ī = ई

ṭ = ट

m̐ = ँ

u = उ

n = न

ū = ऊ

ṇ = ण





## FOREWORD

Every political leader tells us that the future of our country is bound up with the satisfactory settlement of the Hindu-Muslim problem. It is not, however, clear what we are expected to do. At the moment prospects are rather dark. Many of the leaders are overcome with fear and paralysed by despair. They know that society is going to pieces before their very eyes and are yet unable to stop the rot. They exaggerate the difficulties of the situation and persuade themselves into the belief that we are in the grip of inscrutable forces that are too strong for us. They hope against hope that something will turn up and things will right themselves.

It is foolish, however, to imagine that things will come all right, if we leave them alone, though on the whole that is what most of us are trying to do. This attitude of drift and despair is a positive proof that we are growing afraid and timid, that we are lacking in faith and courage. The real trouble is not in the stars but in ourselves. The springs of adventure and action are dried up in us. Unless we set our minds right, our condition will grow worse.

It is not from other people that we require to be saved but from our fear of them. Hindus and Muslims have lived side by side for some centuries and yet we have the most amazing illusions about each other's characters. By the stubborn cherishing of differences, we get engulfed in waves of popular sentiment and hysteria. Men and women are driven into mischievous actions not always by their wickedness but often by their virtues. There never was a cause so wicked that it was not served by good men for what seemed to them good reasons. If we are to prevent the evil which good men do, we must get at those assumptions which are felt, which are more important than those which are formulated.

The author of this book, Sriyut Atulananda Chakrabarti, has made a noble attempt to get behind the popular religious forms and assumptions and insists on those fundamentals which give to each of these religions its driving vitality. Without making the doubtful attempt at evaluation, he presents us with an objective study which is certainly more helpful. The author is quite familiar with the results of modern research on the problems he discusses and presents his case for sympathetic understanding of the religions in an attractive style and with persuasive effect. When we realise the contrast between the demands of the prophet souls, which

this book sets forth so clearly and the practices of the people, we must be somewhat ashamed of ourselves. While true religion is an instrument for growth and hope, the religion we practise leads us to death and despair. Whether Hindu or Muslim, we are all worshippers of form and routine. Our religion is not the genuine article but pseudo stuff, a sort of dope drugging our sense of evil and making us insensitive to the suffering of others. If we are truly religious we will believe in life, not death, in faith, not fear, in adventure and risk and not safety and security. We will have life in us to fight the forces of death. We will never compromise with the empty form, with the mere mechanism. True religion is creative and life-giving and has nothing in common with mechanism, the mechanisation of mind or dogmatism, the mechanisation of will or conformity. It is time we get back to the roots and rediscover religion ; for only those who rediscover religion in themselves will be able to reconstruct society.

WALTAIR,

12. 4. 34.

S. R.



## INTRODUCTION

Mr. Atulananda Chakrabarti's little book **CULTURAL FELLOWSHIP IN INDIA** is a very valuable contribution to the constructive work in which all good patriots are at present engaged. He has made a heroic, and, I feel sure, eminently successful attempt to show the wonderful harmony that could be created out of the present chaos of mutually distrustful communities and hostile religions. As a great thinker has said, "to understand everything is to forget everything" and Mr. Chakrabarti has proved this dictum. He is so well-versed alike in the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Hindu Shastras that he has acquired the vision and the insight to discern the unity behind the apparent diversity of creeds and his profuse and apt quotations from the Sacred Books as well as from the leading Hindu and Muslim Saints and Reformers, lend such power and appeal to his argument that nothing short of deep-seated prejudice can prevent any one from accepting his conclusions.

What has particularly roused my admiration is the dauntlessness with which Mr. Chakrabarti faces the most unpleasant and controversial facts. He does not try to throw dust in our eyes for the

sake of creating good-will; he is certain that the knowledge of the full truth will cleanse our hearts of all unjust prejudice and baseless distrust. His intuition has enabled him to discover—what, by the way, none of our historians have cared to mention—that the Muslim Chroniclers, when they describe wars between Mussalmans and Hindus, indulge in language that does not really indicate their real and permanent attitude towards their fellow-countrymen. Mr. Chakrabarti has even the impartiality to declare that “Jihad” is something utterly different in nature and spirit from the aggressive policies and plundering expeditions of Muslim Kings, and he has cheerfully admitted and sincerely applauded the cultural services rendered to India by Islam and the Mussalmans.

I would consider the country fortunate indeed if it could produce a few such clear thinkers and frank, open-hearted patriots. For, whether Hindus or Mussalmans, we must develop the vision and the breadth of mind to discern and cherish the living bonds of common history and culture which unite us, and learn to feel the urge to future effort which is implied in our past.

14th May, 1934,

DELHI.

M. A. ANSARI

## **AUTHOR'S PREFACE**

The Hindu-Muslim trouble is more a matter of mind than a fight over percentage. Representation in legislatures, powers in administration and enjoyment of privileges are no doubt things that weigh quite heavily. These, however, we have been frantically trying to achieve through a series of pacts and conferences, through elaborate political bargainings and subtle statistical calculations. We have a pathetic confidence in these methods though the desired peace in this direction is long overdue.

Deep at the root of all our discords there is the inflexible belief that the genius of the Hindu and of the Muslim race is opposed in spirit and irreconcilable in practice. On this dusky background, the flickering lights of loyalty to communities throw up ghostly figures of varied suspicion. We get inclined to assume that whatever is good for one community will be so much bad for the other. In this jealous racing of mutually exclusive benefits, the point of common good is invariably lost in a fancied horror. Patriotic activities are accordingly diverted into channels of local purposes and group interests. So the game of out-manoeuvring knows no rest while mutual disbeliefs languidly loiter where they were. It is awfully expensive in time



and energy, and painfully exacting in mental and moral resources.

Unfortunately, we have put too much faith in manipulation. Yet all the forces of manipulations, however much uncanny, have not taken us anywhere near a real rapprochement. The problem at its bottom is pre-eminently a psychological one. But we know only politics and think in terms of politics. Either we ignore other problems or try to offer political remedies only for them. We are reluctant to give importance to anything that does not take a colour from familiar traditions of statemanship. Diplomatic speculations alone keep us busy. Finer sensibilities are left to mourn their lot. We dismiss them lightly, flattering ourselves to be what we call practical statesmen. We are so much in love with a sort of facts and figures ! When minds thus revel in the music of arithmetic, it is rather risky to talk warmly about cultural fellowship. It looks like lacking in a sense of humour.

Discover statistical ratios by all means. Determine carefully what percentages should maintain balance in the constitution. But these alleged practical solutions will at best remain paper arrangement unless we bring about a sense of trust among communities. Economic adjustments and political compromises will come to have any meaning only

when there is the feeling of comradeship. Rights and reservations cannot work well without a preliminary agreement of minds. In all efforts to secure this agreement, it is difficult to exaggerate the virtues of a cultural understanding. Indeed, the best way of helping Hindu-Muslim fellowship is to develop a love of each other's civilization. Matter-of-fact people may receive it with a ripple of sceptic smile. Yet this is the only method, slow but certain, devoid of display but full of refinement. Besides, more than mere political unity is obtained in this way. A greater need of humanity is also satisfied owing to a cultural co-operation.

But where is the leisure to look at the greater issues? The comprehensive view of life is appearing hazy. Immediate gains and narrow pursuits are fast growing out of proportion. We are becoming realists with a vengeance. The war of rights among communities is getting relentlessly rapacious. In this nervous animation, how cleanly we forget that great things cannot be done in a fit! On the other hand, excited endeavours for readjustments are threatening to defeat the very object in view. A workable compromise is very much needed indeed. But nations fed long on lofty ideals can surely devise other means better suited to their culture.

Or rather, let us forget that we have any tradition. Let us ignore our history altogether if we cannot summon up a healthy historical sense. Let us begin quite anew and decide that we have no obligation to obey customary dictates of our oversensitive creeds, to be dominated by memories of mutually undermining habits of thoughts. We can then have a fresh existence. We can just become an indivisible Indian nation of to-day, refusing any loyalty to our misty traditions of the other day. Yes, if we do it, our ancient gifts will have nothing to lose. And we shall have a full and flowering nationalism prized by all our people and respected by the rest of the world.

It is the most ironical part of our being that we are superficial and sneakish about our religious emotions. The emotions that are meant to beautify are used to darken and destroy. For instance, some twenty years ago we never heard of this kind of row against music before the mosque or that kind of rage in favour of recovering lost Hindus. The pity of it is that few of those that led the hoarse cry in stopping music before the mosque can be trusted to have ever gone to any mosque, and that few who made so much of the racial decline among Hindus can be trusted to have their love inspired for its own sake. When the un-

fortunate religious traditions of the Hindus and the Muslims are such as to lend readily provocation for the play of rough passions and make room for uncouth perversion, we would, however, do immensely well to cleanse our brain of all such treacherous traditions to which we are now yielding. They are more superstitions than life-giving principles. We had better see if we can noiselessly enter into a perfectly new lease of life.

But then, in reckoning our possibilities, we suppose, we must know our character, the stuff we are made of. And the character of any race is represented and reflected in its civilization. We come round to the position that for taking a measure of our inner life we must get it through the essentials of our culture, its strength and beauty, its originality together with its universality. We should take note of the fact that life is neither all a single line, nor again, can life be divided into lines of sharp demarcation—moral and material, cultural and political. And politics must seek, to give us real benefit, a harmonious fusion of other human forces that make life strong and sweet, rich and resplendent.



रणधारा बाहि, जयगान गाहि  
उन्माद कलरवे  
मेदि मरुपथ गिरि पर्वत  
यारा एसेछिल सवे,

तारा मोर माझे सवाइ विराजे  
केह नहे नहे दूर,  
आमार शोणिते रयेछे ध्वनिते  
ता'र विचित्र सूर

— रवीन्द्रनाथ

Down the war current, in victorious glee  
Of wild uproar,  
Breaking through desert, hill and mountain  
All who rushed in,  
They all in me live and move—  
No, none at all are apart ;  
In my blood plays a rich harmony  
Of many meeting tunes.



## THE EVOLUTION OF INDIAN CULTURE

Evolution suggests reality, and life is real inasmuch as it is drawn into becoming—through its readiness for change and resourcefulness to preserve character inspite of changes. As a child grows it becomes subject to a multitude of changes and yet does not lose its self. The same principle of growth is evident in regard to Indian culture. Oftener than once it yielded to foreign power and underwent new political experiences. But owing to its gift of an immense vitality the mind of India has not been deadened and still possesses its old and original expression. Similarly, at every call of beauty from outside it opened its mind to receive novel touches but never happened to have parted with its own peculiar genius. To take one instance out of many, neither the Persian nor the Hellenistic influence, with all their lovely contributions, made any fundamental change in the character of Indian sculpture. Not less often had it to face opposition from within. The base of the Hindu culture is Vedic. Already there was a



diversity of ideas in the Vedas. Shortly again the main thought of the Mantra-Brāhmaṇa<sup>1</sup> had an encounter with that of the major Upaniṣads. Later, the Vedānta carried on the intellectual strife. Even the Gītā continued the efforts though only half-heartedly. It is wonderful how the ancient Hindu culture fought for freedom and against convention. But this fighting had never been desperate and desultory, for every action was inspired by the idea of good and not academic zeal. Owing to sincerity of conviction all endeavours were directed towards a common purpose—the finding of truth, and helped to develop the central principle harmonising all diversities. Besides, the very struggle with manifold impressions, innovations and impositions imparted a richness to Indian culture while invigorating it to maintain its obvious oneness.

This oneness has thus never been any isolated excellence. It has freely entered into relations with products of numerous other civilizations, and with the aid of unfailing vitality has proved itself to be a perfectly living organism developing, assimilating and unifying them all. So Indian culture has obtained a composite character. In understanding it one can hardly point to any particular period of

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1 Vedas and Brahmanas i. e. hymns and prose texts indicating how to apply them in sacrificial rites.

history or define it with any sense of fullness. Nowhere has it been altogether static, nowhere has it been a decidedly finished product. It has always had the principle of life itself, the power for growth and aptness for flexibility. All civilizations, in so far as they function as living principles, refuse to take the timid course of any simple and single line of progress.<sup>1</sup> Rather they feel earnest in risking a variety of connexions. It is thus that in Indian culture currents of unlike elements of civilization and varied degrees of forcefulness have met and moved with a complicated yet co-ordinated march. No doubt, sometimes undue emphasis has been laid on differences and the country has, as a result of it, been found fit to be described as "the warring world of Hindustan." This state of things usually occurred only when there were some sort of physical or psychological causes of excitement among successive races trying to set aside and supersede the traditions and accomplishments of each preceding conqueror. The primal provocation for dissensions, however, does not arise from the mere fact that people somehow belong to different groups of races and nations. Different habits of thought have much more to do with the original cause of bitterness.

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1 As Father Schmidt—The Origin and Growth of Religion, p. 8. ]  
—justly thinks in contradiction to the old evolutionary school.

Psychic divisions between opposing conceptions of life is indeed primarily responsible for the greater part of the clash and conflict.<sup>1</sup> Luckily through vigorous exchange of thought and genuine anxiety for understanding, time has come when mankind is far on its way to be initiated into the idea of a world union in order to remedy the evils of national limitations.<sup>2</sup>

Anyway, the instinct for civilizational advance does not suffer us to indulge long in racial animosities. Soon a cooler atmosphere reappears and thoughtfulness prevails. Unhealthy rivalry then yields place to efforts for complementing each other's achievements. Specific racial differences, so lightly and frequently referred to, are proved to be vague assumptions when a searching analysis is brought to bear on the problem.<sup>3</sup> A soft irradiation of intellectual sympathies gives rise to mutual understanding and from time to time directs human progress by reassuring the love of man for man. This sure return at short intervals to normal attitude is inherent in the order of creation. Civilization and morals lose their solidarity and sanction wherever and whenever we forget or ignore that every man is dear to us for no

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1 Norman Angell—*The Great Illusion*.

2 Wallace McClure—*World Prosperity*, p. 38.

3 Alexander Goldenweiser—*History, Psychology and Culture*, p. 393.

other reason than that he is man.<sup>1</sup> In fact, this awakening of love and hope for humanity is a more essential element of civilization than advancement of knowledge and power. Real civilization must not be considered to be identical with a purely intellectual outfit giving strength and skill to acquire material progress. Material progress becomes civilization only when it suggests more than material triumphs at one another's cost and lends itself to be fully utilised for securing the perfection of human society as a whole and, to serve this end, every member of it individually.<sup>2</sup> This, however, need not be confounded with any morbid religiosity. And it is time to emphasise that our country wants to-day not so much misty idealism worrying about sin as creative imagination to bring about a social betterment.

The Vedic civilization thoroughly conformed to the ideal of balance between possession and sacrifice, a healthy joy in the life of the world and a sweet resignation to the thought of God. A life full of naturalness was what the Aryans received as a reward of harmony of matter and spirit. Such a life begot action. There could be no room for

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1 Dr. Albert Schweitzer—The Decay and Restoration of Civilization : Dale Memorial Lectures, 1922 : p. 24.

2 Dr. A. Schweitzer—Civilization and Ethics, p. 5.

dull speculation and false asceticism. It was enjoined that by performance of works alone one should relish a life of hundred years.<sup>1</sup> The vitality that was in actual life and thought of the people was on the one hand transmitted to the hymns of the Vedas and the musings of the Upaniṣads, on the other emboldened them to meet and incorporate other races, religions and cultures of varying powers of resistance. This lively movement in Hindu thought, however, had a setback by the sixth century. The age of originality and creative impulse was lost. Mediaeval Smṛtis and secondary Purāṇas with their burden of copy book maxims and plethora of obscure dogmas very nearly crushed the spring of life and contaminated the power of thinking. And they were followed by dialecticians. Not seldom they dissipated their intellect with tediously spun out arguments devoid of sense or substance and invented irrational provisions and prohibitions restricting the play of life and progress of truth. Yet the flame of spirit that is India's own could not be altogether quenched, and out came a Śaṅkara or a Rāmānuja whose subtle perception of realities inspires great spiritual thoughts even to-day.

The progress of Aryan culture fully participated in a complex and eventful career. There were

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1 Isa Up., ii.

aborigines who lived in mountains and forests and loved to follow wild animals and odd divinities. They were weighed down with a consciousness of inferiority and liked to keep apart from the Aryans. Yet without the least pretence to any culture, the conquered and subdued people gradually managed to make the proud Aryans pay homage to their humble gods and goblins, and this at a time when Aryan religion and art had reached highseriousness. The Atharvaveda shows the result of compromise<sup>1</sup> between Aryan and non-Aryan rites. Things took a curious turn as time went on. The aborigines had once been abhorred for their phallus-worshipping creed. Time came when the Aryans themselves invested great gods like Rudra-Śiva with something of this phallic nature.<sup>2</sup> It may be further noted that with the popularity of aboriginal practices the principal Vedic gods began to be dislodged from their eminence. Imperial deities like Indra and Varuṇa went down in prestige while Rudra and

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1 Any religion howevermuch preponderant is bound to settle with its environment. This is illustrated in the case of Islam as well. The Prophet felt that his religion should come to an agreement with the prevailing sentiments about the Kaaba and, as Julius Germanus in *Islamic Studies* observes, "succeeded in finding new channels of expression for the allegiance of his followers to the sacred black stone. He incorporated into his religion the pagan rites of *tawaf* and *hadj* but in conformity with his monotheistic ideas."

2 Hopkins—C. H. I. Vol., 1: p, 233. And he also quotes Samkhayana Grihya where Rudra and the Rakshasas are associated in *mantras*.

Viṣṇu began to ascend. This represents the event of priests yielding to mass mind and ratifying aboriginal forms of worship.<sup>1</sup>

The Dravidians who were the earliest immigrants<sup>2</sup> were more converted than conquered by the Aryans. The racial and religious differences were in many ways made up by mutual concessions. While accepting a large number of Aryan customs and conduct of life, the Dravidians in no small measure influenced the Aryan civilization. Non-Aryans presented the cult of idol-worship<sup>3</sup> which Aryan priests approved and accepted slowly but surely. Then again, there started an almost unfettered admixture of races. The R̥gveda alone refers to the simple colour contrast of white for the conquerors and black for the conquered. Later literature speaks of innumerable shades of colour

1 A. B. Keith—Religion and Philosophy of the Veda, Vol. I., p. 24.

2 It is no longer possible to accept Dr. Haddon's view—Wanderings of Peoples, p. 26.—about Dravidians being stationary population of India.

3 It has been surmised that "a part of the Arabian idolatry might have been derived from the same source with that of the Hindus; but such an intercourse may be considered as partial and accidental only."—Asiatic Researches: The Fourth Anniversary Discourse delivered by the President. Speaking more about idol, we may refer here to a passage regarding Somnath from a Muslim historian: "It is related in some histories, that this idol was carried from the Kaaba, upon the coming of the Prophet, and transported to India. The Brahmanical records, however, refer it to the time of Krishna, or an antiquity of 4000 years."—Asiatic Researches, Vol. xvii, p. 195.

that fast began to appear in evidence of a medley of mixed marriages. To preserve ethnic purity and provide for cultural exclusiveness the Aryans introduced caste system<sup>1</sup> and it continued doing some good until modern European influences altered the standard of social efficiency. The British Government set up a political machinery which could not take into account any manner of mediaeval attitude towards religion as such and failed to respect any person for his ceremonial sacredness or assumed greatness. Besides, a new order of stern economic forces entirely subverted the old social structure and offered Śūdras chances to acquire accomplishments and individually gain learning, wealth and even salutations from Brāhmaṇs.

The Vedic creed was primarily an abandonment to a full-blooded life. Hymns are redolent of joy and youth. Principal gods are repeatedly praised for their youth,<sup>2</sup> and the entire literature rings with the pæan of conquest, overlordship and *joie de vie*. Plain living and the philosophy of resignation that the Sage of the Śākya represented could not agree with the Brāhmaṇic temperament. The grandeur of Buddhist arts and architectures did

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1 There is only very thin argument in favour of Dr. G. Slater's view—The Dravidian Element in Indian Culture, pp. 53 150—that caste is of Dravidian origin.

2 But they were bearded. Mohenjo-daro statues, like the pre-Sargonid Mesopotamian ones, have beard with the upper lip shaved.



inspire, but not its view of life which for some-time was resorted to as a release from ponderous rites or as a matter of experiment. It generally remained the state religion of Śūdra kings and foreign conquerors. It could thus have a short-lived glory, and by that time all its suitable suggestions and attractive virtues were worked out and absorbed by the Brāhmaṇic faith. At the same time, Buddhism was impressed with Brāhmaṇic mannerism in making a god of Buddha. *Ahiṃsā* could practically live here only when allied with a Vedic god. He was Viṣṇu who, however, was not quite a favourite of the orthodox Brāhmaṇs. In the Mahābhārata are seen Śiśupāla, Jarāsandha and other protagonists of Brāhmaṇism ranged against Kṛṣṇa who is par excellence the patron of the Pāṇḍavas—a hill-tribe of doubtful Aryan origin. It may also be noted that Śiva—the great Hindu god of pronounced pre-Aryan connexion—though he took meat in the days of the Mahābhārata, in later ages adopted *ahiṃsa* diet<sup>1</sup> and passed for a full-fledged vegetarian. A further step towards evolution was arrived at when he became intimately associated with Buddhism in Bengal. Here Viṣṇu took an even more complex form. Hussain Shah,

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<sup>1</sup> Sanction of diet is always very elastic and illusive. No less a sage than Yajñavalkya himself was rather inclined to beef: vide, Sp. Br., iii, 1, 2, 21.

the Sultan of Gour, made a simple but very effective and, at the same time, thoroughly original synthesis by founding the worship of Satya-Pir.<sup>1</sup>

This idea of blending religious beliefs was at work from very early times of Muslim invasion. We are informed<sup>2</sup> that Saiyad Sālār, the nephew of Mahmud of Ghazna, was slain at Bahraich by the Hindu Raja Sōhēldēō. In honour of the dead a shrine was afterwards erected there on the site of an earlier temple said to have been dedicated to Sun-god. Hindus of Upper India worship Saiyad Sālār as one with power to give eyes to the blind. This syncretism was possible because the Muslim conquest of India had but a halting progress. Inactive periods intervened to allow time for crude passions to filter down and present opportunities for reconciliation of political sentiments as well as religious observances. Even Mahmud of Ghazna was none of a cold-blooded tyrant. During the intervals of expeditions he may have raised many mosques and allowed many Mullahs to be preaching but he is never reported to have compelled any Hindu to embrace Islam.<sup>3</sup> And he gave India a

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1 The first half of the name means Narayana or Visnu and the second half is an Arabic synonym for Supreme Spirit.

2 J. R. A. S., 1911, p. 195.

3 Muhammad Nazim—Sultan Mahmud.

great admirer in the person of Al 'Biruni who kept himself calm while wild hatred had been flaming around and eagerly appealed for a cultural understanding. From his wide and direct knowledge of Sanskrit and of the life of contemporary Indians, Al 'Biruni<sup>1</sup> could vouchsafe for their belief in 'one and eternal God who in his sovereignty is unique.' He presented the Hindu case with copious references to Śāstras and exceptional sympathy, and argued that the educated among them believed in 'the unity of God as absolute' while only 'the uneducated low class people of little understanding' adhered to idol-worship. He frankly asserted that learned Hindus 'never made an idol of any supernatural being much less of God.' At the same time, he had not the hesitation to express the universal truth<sup>2</sup> about the 'idoltrous nature of man' which was likely to be shared by common people among Muslims as well.

1 A.-B. I.—vol. i, ch. ii.

2 Incidentally we may refer here to another factor of universal appeal. It is music. Muslim theologians have contradictory opinions about it. The illuminating work of Jhya 'Ulum ad-Din of al-Ghazzali translated by D. B. MacDonald under the title 'Emotional Religion in Islam as affected by Music and Singing' represents various views. About a prominent oppositionist it has been said: "He disliked beating time with a stick, and was wont to say that freethinkers made use of that to divert their attention from hearing the Qur'an." The author himself concludes that music is "sometimes absolutely forbidden and sometimes permissible and sometimes disliked and sometimes to be loved.....And it is loved with reference to him whom the love of God Most High controls and in whom music and singing arouse only praiseworthy qualities." —J. R. A. S., 1901—2.

In so far as recognition of one God is concerned the two faiths have a common point. But as to this conception of one God they have noticeable distinctions. Islam conceives there is no God but Allah. He alone exists and He exists for Muslims alone. The idea of a Hindu, on the other hand, is that the same one God is as much for him as for any one else outside his faith. This monotheism of universal approach was first realised by the Aryans. The Semites gave it an exclusive character <sup>1</sup> and the conception of spiritual monopoly grew out of the Old Testament. <sup>2</sup> This spirit was communicated to the Qur'an. The Holy Qur'an, however, with its dictates of self-control tried considerably to curb the exertions in favour of religious intolerance. But the Traditions with their secondary sanction liberated the suppressed passion. There is another shade of distinction. Islam worships a personal God. Though sometimes taking this view, Hinduism generally feels Him not as a separate entity but as pervading the whole creation. A third distinction is revealed in the fact that the Islamic religious organisation is based on a practical sense of community whereas Hinduism in this respect has no

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1 Ihering—*Evolution of the Aryan*, pp. 242—45.

2 "For I the Lord thy God *am* a jealous God."—Exodus, xx, 5.  
 "For thou shalt worship no other god : for the Lord, whose name *is* jealous, *is* a jealous God."—*Ibid*, xxxiv, 14.

better than a theoretical interest and in practice gives way to exaggerated feelings of individuality. However, in the nature of these and other differences there is nothing that can prove to be even a very remote cause of ill-feeling with which the two contending brothers are now overpowered.

The allegation that early Muslims were always fierce conquerors and reckless iconoclasts is contrary to historical facts. The far-sight of Caliphs at home and the sense of practical difficulties of Sultans in India advised them to proceed along lines of least resistance. Pressure of circumstances persuaded the Abbaside Caliphate to pursue a policy of culture and compromise.<sup>1</sup> But these were more or less negative aspects. Positive energy was supplied by the lives and teachings of Sufi saints who were of kindred spirit with Hindu Sannyāsis. They, along with a frequently appearing crop of religious reformers proved a powerful agency in bringing about a cultural synthesis. Their work was helped with the admiration of the rulers and devotion of the people of the land. The nobility also had high regards for their precepts. This was of special value as expressing a united response of men of influence of both

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1 Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, vol. x: Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar—Slow Progress of Islam Power in India.

religions. For nobility in every country is a mixed social composition and not represented by any particular race.<sup>1</sup>

Though the idea did not create any stir at the time, a tragic attempt to proclaim the fellowship of the two faiths was an occurrence in the reign of Fīroz Tughlak. A Brāhman gave it out that there was no fundamental disagreement between Hinduism and Islam. He was beheaded by the order of the Sultan who insisted that if it were so the poor fellow could as well abjure his own faith in favour of Islam.<sup>2</sup> This the Brāhman naturally refused to do for what he wanted was not replacement of one faith by another but the introduction of an attitude of friendliness between them. The first great commotion in the way of religious amalgam is associated with the reforms of the great emperor Akbar. His *Ibādat-Khāna*—the house of worship—was a meeting place of saints and scholars of multifarious religious orders.<sup>3</sup> The next historical event in this direction happened in the 21st year of Shah Jehan's reign. In the garden house of Jafar Khan Sadhu prince Dara

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1 Eugene Pittard—*Race and History*, p. 320.

2 E. H. I.: *Shams-i Siraj 'Afif—Tarikh-i Fīroz Shahi*.

3 *Journal of the Bombay Royal Asiatic Society*; 1928, Vol. iii:  
Rev. H. Heras, S. J.—*Three Mughal Paintings on Akbar's Religious Discussions*.

Shekho met sage Baba Lal. The prince questioned and the sage made replies in eclectic method adjusting Vedāntic doctrines with Sufi tenets.<sup>1</sup> Later, the prince had to pay very dearly for his venture. But though his life and throne were taken by Awrangzeb, the emperor could not stifle the movement. During the latter part of his reign Sādhu Prāṇ Nath collected parallel passages from the Vedas and the Qur'an. When a disciple was initiated into his faith of accepting the unity of Hinduism and Islam in essential points<sup>2</sup> he had to partake of a social dinner with members of both communities. The movement for harmonising the two creeds grew apace. The patron of *Sūnniyavāda* theory, Raja Dayārām plainly declared :

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“Hindus and Musselmans are of the same nature, two leaves of one tree—these call

1 Asiatic Researches, vol. xvii, p. 294 : H. H. Wilson—Religious Sects of the Hindūs

2 Even in regard to ritualistic observances a lot of similarities may be found out. For instance, the Hindu belief in *Vaitarani* bears interesting resemblance to the Muhammadan notion of *As-Sirat* (borrowed probably from Zoroastrian and Jewish system) i.e. 'sharp bridge laid over the middle of hell which has to be crossed at close of the Judgment for decision whether one is to go to paradise or place of torment.' Vide, p. 125 of The Indian Antiquary, 1886 : H. G. M. Murray Aynsley—Comparative Study of Asiatic Symbolism.

their teachers *Mullahs*, those term them *pundits*, two pitchers of one clay: one performs *Numaz*, the other offers *puja*: Where is the difference? I know of no dissimilarity . . . . Ask of them the difference, inquire the importance of these distinctions, and they will quarrel with you: dispute not, but know them to be the same—avoid all idle wrangling and strife, and adhere to the truth . . . .”<sup>1</sup>

The effect of these continued and earnest preachings was deep and wide and strong. With a healthy condition prevailing, people had no uneasy thought of communal grievance and had no occasion to be reminded of any self-created obligation to fight for such a cause.

Only from about three decades past the atmosphere has been charged with artificial heat. We are being steadily led into a belief that our communal obligation is real. And having once formed this habit of thinking we are fast becoming incapable of freeing our mind of this obsession. This present mood, however, does not indicate that we have been nourishing so much venom all the while;

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1 H. H. Wilson—Religious Sects of the Hindus.



rather we have, only out of an appeal arising from the present circumstances, produced abnormal enthusiasm for inviting ruin.<sup>1</sup> Our evil genius has been summoned by a false alarm though normally we do not feel like ruining each other. Our thinking alone has made it so. It is the lure of a disaster. And this we have got to resist with all our alacrity of spirit and vigour of right thinking. Once we have regained our consciousness of the absence of any incurable bent for distrust, any hopeless predilection for disunion, immediately we shall begin to realise that there is absolutely none. People of India to-day have to remember always the clear fact that the country belongs to more races than one and her history has been built up of tributes from many civilizations. The children of her soil are Aborigines, Dravidians, Aryans, Scythians, Zoroastrians, Muhammadans and others. In the temple of her great tradition is chanted a magnificent chorus of all the ancient and modern melodies of cults and cultures. Her God is the God of Humanity.

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<sup>1</sup> The idea may be compared to the following observation about the mentality of European nations on the eve of the Great War: "It is a curious psychological phenomenon that as soon as a country engages in war, there develops or is created among the masses a frenzy of patriotic excitement which is no index of their pre-war desires."—Sidney Bradshaw Fay—*The Origins of the World War*, Vol. ii, pp. 548—9.

# HINDU-MUSLIM FELLOWSHIP OF THOUGHT

## ANXIETY FOR COMRADESHIP

*So no budhyā śubhayā samyunnaktu*—‘May He unite us in fellowship and good thoughts’—thus the sage of the Upaniṣad<sup>1</sup> prayed. And what had been the spring of such a hope? The prayer ran—‘God is one, above all colours, and with manifold powers He dispenses the inherent needs of all peoples and all times.’ The great Prophet of Islam played on the same tune of universal fellowship: *Waz-kurū ni‘mat-Allāhe ‘alāikum*—‘Remember God’s love on you.’<sup>2</sup> How His love had worked? The Prophet continued—‘When ye were enemies He by His love so bound all your hearts that from then ye became all brothers to each other.’ In rousing his followers to become friendly with their neighbours the prophet enjoined<sup>3</sup>—‘Say thou: ye people of the Book, come to a proper understanding between us and you.’ With a view to a practical realization of his ideal he planned the formation of a

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1 St. Up., iv, 1.

2 Qrn., iii, 102.

3 Qrn., iii, 57.

band of selfless workers<sup>1</sup> 'who call to the good, and command what is just, and forbid what is evil.' In his yearning that the growth of a liberal comradeship might not be prejudiced, he solemnly warned<sup>2</sup>—"Be ye not like those who make a division and become sectaries.' To the minds thus born and grown up in the music of mutual understanding, dislike of division is no strange emotion. Now that the followers of Islam have got another group of neighbours in the people of the Vedas, and both happen to have formed a vital attachment and have beautified the land of Aśoka and Akbar with wonderful works of arts and crafts, the moral as well as the material needs of these two heirs of a mighty past demand a relation of superb harmony. The Vedas<sup>3</sup> pray : "Harmony for us with our own men, harmony with strangers—harmony of Aśvins, do ye here confirm in us. May we be harmonious with mind, with knowledge, may we not fight with the mind of gods, let not noises of destruction arise."

### UNDERCURRENT OF HARMONY

The Aryan mind has an amazing capacity of co-ordinating opposing ideas and of establishing a bond of relationship between conceptions that move in separate grooves. Thus it has been admitted—

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1 Qrn., iii, 100.

2 Qrn., iii, 101.

3 A. V., vii, 52.

“If one were to turn to any great philosophy or any great system of thought upon which could be built up a harmony between races, a harmony between conflicting thoughts, where could one go to find it more readily than to the great philosophies of India itself? Those philosophies where brotherhood is inculcated, where peace and harmony and co-operation are enjoined; those philosophies which look at the world not in a mere abstract way but as something essentially composed of differences, and yet essentially calling for a harmony of difference rather than a mere uniformity of thought or of action.”<sup>1</sup> Men were divided into families and tribes so that they might properly know each other in relation to the whole. With this idea in view the Qur’an<sup>2</sup> points out—‘If God pleased, He would have made you one people, but He would try you in what He has given you. Strive then to excel each other in good works: to God is your return altogether; then He will tell you that concerning which you now disagree.’ Love for all and for good works in the name of God are texts of innumerable verses in the Upaniṣads. The Gītā<sup>3</sup> teaches—‘whose heart is open to all, to him I am available.’

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<sup>1</sup> Prime Minister's speech in opening the debate in Minorities Committee—2nd session of the R. T. C.

Qrn., v, 53.

<sup>3</sup> Gita, xi, 55.

To the immense bliss of humanity the Qur'an<sup>1</sup> declares—"Our God and your God is One God, and after Him we strive." It fits in so marvellously well with what the Upaniṣad speaks of God—"This is the Divine Being, the world-worker, who is the Great Soul ever dwelling in the hearts of all people."

### UNIVERSAL TRUTH

The Qur'an sends out a gracious invitation : "Let us all go upwards and arrive at truths and laws which are common to us." Fortunately, one has not to painfully strain his imagination for recognising the palpable parallelism of thought between the people of these two religions, millions of whom express their faith in

*Tat tuṃasi.....*That art thou.

and

*Ana 'l-Ḥaqq.....*I am God.

A delightful mass of well-matched flowers of resembling ideas can be plucked from the Aryan and Islamic religious lores for stringing them together in a garland of victory to adorn the universal human soul. An endless stream of parallel passages is accessible. They shed a flood of light on the deep-seated similarities in the two religious systems which

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<sup>1</sup> Qm., xxix, 45.

a reverent enquirer will find extremely pleasant and profitable. Yet nice touches of distinctive originality<sup>1</sup> do not go without being felt. These arise from direct emotion of the honest seekers of joy and truth. Such a kinship of ideas is just the divine brotherhood of truth which is all the while alive with the breath of race-genius.<sup>2</sup> A subtle and yet always observable peculiarity in the structure and style of thinking baffles any cheap criticism for search of plagiarism. One may do well in remembering, as an acknowledged authority<sup>3</sup> very precisely observes: "It is only natural that Islam should have flashed across the consciousness of a simple people untouched by any ancient cultures."

1 Palmer's Introduction to the Qur'an—S. B. E.—is suggestive on this point: "No religion, certainly no sacred books of a religion, ever possessed entire originality. The great principles of morality, and the noble thoughts which are common to humanity, must find their way into the scriptures, if these are to have any hold upon men.....Judged then by the standard which we apply to other creeds, Muhammad's religion stands forth as something strikingly new and original."

2 Maulana Muhammad Ali in a speech in the R. T. C. explained the nature of this kind of cultural brotherhood, harmonious but not unified, in the following verse:

"Not like to like, but like in difference;  
Self-reverent each and reverencing each;  
Distinct in individualities,  
But like each other, e'en as those who love."

3 R.R.T.I.; also cf. Preliminaries to the Qur'an by Sale who notes that Arabians, at the time of Mohammed's setting up his doctrine, were 'unacquainted with the luxuries and delicacies of the Greeks and Persians.' They had a taste for poetry but did not feel able to write to a considerable length till some time after the preaching of Islam. Learning in Arabia developed only when other countries came under her sway and her internal peace was secured.

## SOME SALIENT FEATURES

Let us then devoutly proceed to compare the philosophy as well as the theology of these two great races. The findings, we hope, will, as an earnest thinker<sup>1</sup> says, "open the eyes of the several denominational communities to the utterly common essentials of their own and others' religions and go far to bring about the so-much-to-be-desired peace between the creeds." Relating to the Minority question in our politics it has been very cogently remarked: "Far too much has been heard of differences on details of minor importance and too little of the broad general principles which must be applied if there is to be any satisfactory solution of this perplexing problem."<sup>2</sup>

**One Religion :** It is no mere philosophical speculation when the great masters of the Aryan as well as the Islamic religion emphasised on the existence of One God for all people. The Qur'an<sup>3</sup> speaks—'Men were of one religion and One God.' The Vedānta<sup>4</sup> declares—'Verily, all religions pertain to One God.' The Qur'an<sup>5</sup> again is heard—*Innamal-mu'minūna ikhḫawun*—"They are all breth-

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Bhagavan Das.

<sup>2</sup> Memorandum on the Minorities question by Sir Prabhashankar Pattani.

<sup>3</sup> Qrn., ii, 209.

<sup>4</sup> Br. S., ii, 37.

<sup>5</sup> Qrn., ii, 10.

ren who believe in One God.' The Bhāgvat has the same utterance—'Previously there was one scripture, one hymn, one God, one sacrifice and one caste.'

**Sectarianism Discouraged :** The Qur'an <sup>1</sup> discountenances sectarianism—"As to those who make a division in their religion and become sectaries, have nothing to do with them ; their affair is with God, and He will tell them what they have done." The Rgveda <sup>2</sup> voices the same truth—"A common purpose do I lay before you, and worship with your general oblations." The saying of the Qur'an<sup>3</sup>—"Let all join in strongly holding the rope of divine love : never think of separation."—compares perfectly well with that of the Vedas <sup>4</sup>—"Have your drink in one hotel, share equally the same food ; I bind you all in one rope of love and unity.' Naturally, therefore, the Hindus never think of imposing their religion on any, and the Prophet of Islam quietly assures <sup>5</sup>—"There is no compulsion in religion."

**Man's Spiritual Oneness with the Maker :** The unity of God and man has been promulgated with equal vehemence in both the creeds. Jami says—"All was One ; there was no duality, no pre-

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1 Qrn., vi, 160.

2 R.V., x, 191.

3 Qrn., iii, 98.

4 A.V., iii, 30, 6.

5 Qrn., ii, 257.



tence of 'mine' or 'thine'." The same note is struck when Śāṇḍilya <sup>1</sup> says—"Truly this All is Brahman (God).... This my Ātman (Soul) in my inmost heart is this Brahman." Again, Hallaj says—"I am He whom I love, and He whom I love is I." The same love-story has been reported when the Yajurveda says "I am God" and when Yājñavalkya <sup>2</sup> says—"Verily, everything is not dear that you may love everything; but that you may love thy self, therefore, everything is dear." Or again, the Dervish poet, Baba Kuhi of Shiraj says, "I past away into nothingness, I vanished, and lo: I was the all-living only God I saw." This may be compared to the famous saying of the Atharvaveda—"This my soul is God"; the Vedāntasāra further emphasises—"Creature is no one else than God." About the ultimate unity of man with God, the Qur'an<sup>3</sup> declares, "All will return to us." The Vedānta<sup>4</sup> proclaims, "Man returns to God in the end, so the Śāstra says."

**Psychological Unity of Mankind:** Human life having a spiritual origin and end, its universal oneness has obtained a clear expression in both the religions. The Brhadāranyaka solemnly declares, "In the beginning mankind had only one class—the Brāhmana." The Mahābhārata <sup>5</sup> repeats the same

1 Chnd. Up., iii.

4 Br. S., i, 20.

2 Br. Ak. Up.

5 Mbh., Santiparva, chpt. 188.

3 Qrn., xxi, 93.

idea. Sāyana <sup>1</sup> pointedly announces: 'All have come out of one stock.' The great German philosopher Schopenhauer, <sup>2</sup> who performed his devotions in the *mantras* of the Upaniṣad, very finely observes: "In all the individuals of the world, in whatever endless number they may present themselves, after and beside one another, yet only one and the same, the truly existing Being, present and identical in them all, manifests itself." Of this basic unity of man, the Qur'an also informs: 'We have created you all from one breath of life.' And a remark of Sir Iqbal <sup>3</sup> may be taken as a commentary: "The perception of life as an organic unity is a slow movement, and depends for its growth on a people's entry into the main current of the world events. This opportunity was brought to Islam by the rapid development of a vast empire."

**War—A Necessary Evil:** But "the spirit of unity flashed behind the sword of Islam." <sup>4</sup> The *Habib*, the beloved of God, had no love of unprovoked and unwarranted warfares. The Qur'an speaks :

1 R. V. Cm., iii, 54, 9.

2 Philosophy of the Upanisads.

3 R. R. T. I. ; on the other hand, it may be noted that "the national pride of the Arabs could not endure the practical application of the theoretical precepts of Islam that all believers should be on an absolutely equal footing. The new converts remained Moslems of the second class."—Historians' History of the World, Vol. VIII, P. 17.

4 H. G. Wells, Salvaging of Civilization.

‘God likes not any disturbances’ <sup>1</sup> . . . . “Commit not disorders in the earth.” <sup>2</sup> . . . . “Fight in the way of God against those who fight against you, but transgress not. . . . Fight not until they attack. . . . but if they attack you, only then you kill them.” <sup>3</sup> In the same way, the Gītā <sup>4</sup> says, ‘My devotee is free from bitterness and is full of love and kindness for all.’ And only when vital necessity spoke, the Aryans felt compelled to take up arms. The great god Viṣṇu <sup>5</sup> in leading the Aryan migrators into India sings verses with the slogan—‘Who shall fight against us, them only we shall slay.’ The other Vedas <sup>6</sup> also express the same spirit—‘O Indra, kill him who stands in the way of God.’

**Love of Peace :** Yet in spite of so much fighting, the Aryan sages sing forth the sonorous music of universal peace <sup>7</sup>: *Ann*, peace be in the heavenly regions, peace in the middle spaces, peace in the earth, peace in the waters, peace in the plants, peace in the woods; the gods all have peace, God of gods have peace, all creatures have peace; peace—living peace—reign all around; this all-embracing peace come within me. Similarly the superb cadence of the Prophet’s message

1 Qrn., ii, 199.

2 Qrn., vi, 54.

3 Qrn., ii, 186-87.

4 Gita, xii, 13.

5 Y.V., i, 25.

6 R.V., viii, 64, 1 ; S.V., ii, 9, 1.

7 Y.V., xxxvi, 17.

rolls on : "Let there be no violence in religion.<sup>1</sup> If they embrace Islam, they are surely directed ; but if they turn their backs, verily unto thee belongeth preaching only. To make them walk in the right way is not incumbent on you, but Allah guides whom He pleases." The Vedas are anxious to deliver the message of universal good : "Make me dear to the gods, make me dear to the kings, dear to everything that sees, both to Śūdra and to Ārya".<sup>2</sup> The ideal of peace has inspired the central thought of the Qur'an. It has been rightly observed : "In fact, the idea of *peace* is the dominant idea of Islam, and the goal to which Islam leads is called the *abode of peace* (x, 25)."<sup>3</sup> Commenting on the need of spiritual power to combat the present day "epidemic of moral perversity," Tagore notices : "In this galloping competition of hurtfulness, on the slope of a bottomless pit, no nation dares to stop or slow down . . . To-day, more than ever before in history, the aid of spiritual power is needed . . . The God of humanity has arrived at the gates of the ruined temple of the tribe. Though he has not yet found his altar, I ask the men of simple faith, wherever they may be in the world, to bring their offering of sacrifice to him, and to believe that it is far better

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1 Sale, Al Qur'an, p. 503.

2 A.V., xix, 12, 1.

3 Maulana Muhammad Ali's Qur'an—Foot note 400.

to be wise and worshipful than to be clever and supercilious. I ask them to claim the right of manhood to be friends of men."<sup>1</sup>

## FRIENDLINESS AMONG RACES IN EARLY AGES

In earlier times the philosophy of Religion undertook to preach the spiritual oneness of mankind. To-day the task has been accepted by the science of Economics which is making a vigorous propaganda for the material recognition of humanity as one unit. The need of treating history of mankind as a single whole is being emphasised.<sup>2</sup> Propelled by the vision of the same truth, Pococke<sup>3</sup> says, "I must beg the reader to bear in mind the distinct assertion, which I have already made, of the national unity of Egyptians, Greeks and Indians." The same opinion is voiced by no less an authority than Sir William Jones—"The Hindus had an immemorial affinity with the old Persians, Ethiopians, Egyptians, Phoenicians, Greeks, and Tuscans and Scythians." Murray notices<sup>4</sup> that the Indian and Arabian fleet met in comradeship for

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<sup>1</sup> R. M.

<sup>2</sup> H. G. Wells—*The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind*, Introduction.

<sup>3</sup> *India in Greece*. p. 122.

<sup>4</sup> *Handbook of Egypt*, p. 319.

commercial adventures. Dr. Satis Chandra Vidya-bhusan writes,<sup>1</sup> "In all probability the primitive Aryans must have borrowed their alphabetic system from the Semetic people. The Aryans and Semetics were neighbours of each other." On the other hand, Pococke<sup>2</sup> informs that 'a system of Hinduism pervades the whole Babylonian and Assyrian empires.' We may also note that from the close of 8th century, Baghdad—Dar-al-Salaam—the city of peace, was the emporium of learning and luxury, and freely utilised the wisdom of the Hindus. In the 11th century Buddhism vigorously flourished in Balk, and in Baghdad of King Haran-ar-Rasid Buddhism was given shelter in some corners. And it is interesting to note that Indian Musalmans speedily lost their attachment for the rest of the Muslim world and gradually identified their interests with the fortunes of India. A sympathetic way of studying the tales of early antagonisms will "forward the cause so dear to us all—mutual understanding and toleration, the very first necessary step to that higher unity which is at once the dream of the poet, the fervent prayer of the philosopher, the hope of the rising generation and the true destiny of India."<sup>3</sup>

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1 The Indian World p. 387.

2 India in Greece, p. 178.

3 Prof. Khuda Bux in his Calcutta University Lectures on Islamic History.

## SPIRITUAL EFFECTS OF ISLAMIC INVASION

Let us now briefly pursue the course of events that followed the meeting of the Islamic and the Aryan civilizations on the soil of India. While an intense sincerity gives a mark of individuality each of its own, the two great creeds intersect at so many points as to leave no doubt why the benevolent Power in heaven had ordained the two to dwell in harmony in this great land of antiquity. And the result of this meeting had proved true to the best instincts of those concerned. No fresh vigour, no new outlook, no spring of novelty to stir a soulless nation—thus exhausted of its creative genius, India lay in the dust grovelling when the new-born might of Islam appeared to knock at the gates of the Indus territory. The distant din of the followers of *Lā ilāha ill-Allāh* at the gates of the Brahmarṣideśa and the re-discovery of the vigorous message of *Elkamevālvitūm* by the great Saṃkarācārya of the land of Agastya Rṣi were happenings of the most surprising coincidence in India of the 9th century. And yet another event. Later on, the influx of the Islamic invaders in the Northern India shook the citadel of the orthodox pundits who migrated towards the South (although the Aryanisation of the South is as old as the migration of Agastya and the composition of the Rāmāyana), carrying with them the

Vaiṣṇavism of the Mahābhārata and Viṣṇu Purāṇa amalgam. This paved the way to the foundation of a mighty all-India religion by the 12th century, under the leadership of the great Rāmānuja, on the ruins of the Vedic and Buddhistic religions by mingling the characters of the Lord of Kurukshetra and of Bodh-Gaya in the person of the Vedic Viṣṇu and finishing the whole picture with the colour of the Vedāntic doctrine of One God.

### EMOTION REPLACING INTELLECTUALISM

The emotional melody of the Śruti <sup>1</sup>—*raso bai sah* <sup>2</sup>—is often inaudible in the calm intellectual yearning for supreme knowledge—*tajjālān śānta upāsita* <sup>3</sup>—quietly do you worship Him. The emotional voice of the Qur'an <sup>4</sup>—'God will love you'—is almost stifled in the sombre warnings <sup>5</sup>—"And fear God, surely God is severe in punishing!" But the ideal of love and sweetness gradually liberated itself from the rigidity of intellectualism and the fetters of fear. The triumphant note of the Taittiriya Upaniṣad <sup>6</sup>—"Truly, out of joy arise all these beings, by joy they live after they have arisen, and when they pass away they are again absorbed into joy."—

1 Tait. Up., vii, 2.

2 "The Infinite is love itself."—Tagore's translation.

3 Chnd. Up., xiv, 1.

4 Qrn., iii, 29.

5 Qrn., v, 3.

6 iii, 6.



came floating down. The Indian Vaiṣṇavism and the Persian Sufism began to acquire a wide expansion and shrill expression of the mystic love of God until the realization of God as Love resounded from one end to the other of the entire Eastern world. Ibn-al-Arabi declared : “ I follow the religion of Love.” Guru Nānak shouted out—

“ He lives who loves God’s person ;  
No other lives.”

Hafiz sang forth :—

“ Love is where thy glory falls  
Of thy face—on convent walls  
Or on tavern floors, the same  
Unextinguishable flame.”

Rabidās said, “Thou seest me, O Divine Man, and I see Thee, and our love becomes mutual.” Dādu, Rāmānanda, Kabir all started throbbing and pulsating with the music of love. Śrī Chaitanya <sup>1</sup> prayed —‘O Lord ! bestow on me that all-devouring intense love with which an unfaithful woman concentrates on her paramour.’ He wept and danced in ecstasy, taking himself to be Rādhā in passionate longing for the love of Kṛṣṇa.

### SUFISTIC IMPETUS ON BHAKTI CULT

The Nārada Sūtra describes the love of God as—

*Vraja gopikābat*—that of the damsels and wives of the cowherd people of Vraja who loved Kṛṣṇa with a romantic tenderness and wild emotion. The Qur'an<sup>1</sup> occasionally lays aside its awe for God and touches the chord of love—"When they hear what has been revealed to the apostle, thou seest their eyes overflow with tears at the truth they find therein." But it is Sufism that had brought in an immense impetuosity to this mild feeling of love. And it ruled so long that even in Raja Ram Mohan and Mahārṣi Devendranath<sup>2</sup> its influence appeared in no uncertain measure. Ibn-al-Arabi spoke of God as a "tender maid." The soul of religion was rescued out of the bonds of ritualism. A Bāul said, "At every step I have my Mecca and Kashi."<sup>3</sup> Just as Śrī Chaitanya smashed the miserable logicians of his country, so, long ago Jalaluddin Rumi scornfully enquired of the scholastic:

"Do you know a name without a thing  
answering to it ?

Have you ever plucked a rose from  
R.O.S.E.?"

The scholastic gloom began to be dispersed with

1 Qrn., v, 86.

2 Romain Rolland—The Life of Ramakrishna.

3 Otto Strauss informs that the Lonkas refused homage to idols and attendance at shrines.—Religions of the World edited by Prof. Carl Clemen.

brilliant sarcasms everywhere. The Bāul poet said to a Vaiṣṇava theologian :

“A goldsmith, methinks, has come to the  
flower garden,  
He would appraise the lotus, forsooth  
By rubbing it on his touchstone !”

Erotic symbolism broke out in rich profusion. Jalal-uddin Rumi<sup>1</sup> burst out—

“God is Saqi and the wine :  
He knows that manner of love is mine.”

The Soma drinking of the Vedas<sup>2</sup> is quite celebrated :

“By drinking Soma we have become  
immortal.”

Indra is requested to come to the worshipper in haste—

“Like lover lured by female charms,  
Who rushes to his mistress’ arms.”

But this is only a likeness, a metaphor, but not the thing-in-itself. In the Bhāgbat<sup>3</sup> the note of romance is sounded—‘Gopis won Lord Kṛṣṇa by desire.’ But for opulence of erotic symbolism, for force and simplicity, for pathos and intensity, for sweetness and light, for music and perfection, Sufism has its only parallel in the love romance of the

Vaiṣṇava literature of Bengal. The entire East became one vast sea of tumultuous love with the dawn of radiant joy glittering over the wave crests.

### LOVE OF HUMANITY

But the high sea of love could not be calm. The tide swelled on higher and wider. The love of God alone could not make it tranquil. The love of man came to be indissolubly mingled with the fervour of love of God. The Islamic suzerainty over India gave the country a new vision of the brotherhood of mankind. In spite of the Vedantic view of equality and oneness of mankind, the popular creed of caste-differences was jealously lorded over by the Dharma Śāstras which from time to time were readjusted—the early Sūtra period represented by Āpastamba and Baudhāyana group, the middle age represented by the Smṛtis of Manu-Yājñavalkya group, and the later group of Nārada and Bṛhaspati by the 5th and 6th century A.D. These continued dominating the Hindu religio-social affairs, and the Brāhmins delighted in the self-complacent thought of attributing an inherent impurity to the lower castes. But the force and splendour of the living faith in the positive unity of human beings promulgated by Islam stirred the depth of religious emotion of a band of great reformers. From the middle of the 15th down to the

end of the 18th century the country was blessed with the birth of no less than a dozen of religious sects which enthusiastically appropriated the doctrine of intrinsic value of man as a man, and pulled down the rigid walls of race and caste. The barriers of race and class once washed off, Hindus and Musalmans, Brāhmīns and Śūdras all were buoyed up on the dancing waves of love. Dādu's chief Muslim disciple Rajjab declared : "All the world is Veda, and all creations the Koran." Śrī Chaitanya shattered to pieces the Brāhminic rigours, and freely accepted Islamic ideals and followers. "The ineffable mystery of God's love-call," says Poet Rabindranath,<sup>1</sup> "taking shape in an endless panorama of colours and forms, inspired activities in music that overflowed the restrictions of classical conventionalism. Our *Kīrtan* music of Bengal came to its being like a star flung up by a burning whirlpool of emotion in the heart of a whole people." The great Persian mystic Abu Said ibn Abi al-khayr with amazing realization of universal brotherhood poured out truths of immense dimension :

"And never will true Mussalman appear  
Till faith and infidelity are one".

Chāṇḍīdās, a Vaiṣṇava poet of the *Sahajīyā* cult, called out : "Listen, O brother man, the truth of man

is the highest truth, there is no other truth above it." The later 'mad-cap' Bāul poets of Bengal also possessed the same fire and passion—the love of the Infinite and the spiritual unity of all finite beings. They were a sort of Vaiṣṇava-Sufists,<sup>1</sup> and opened their hearts and creeds to all tribes and classes. But their creed was no dogma. It was simply the spirit of abandonment to The Man of the Heart:

“That is why, brother, I become a mad-cap  
Baul

No master I obey, nor injunctions, canons  
or custom.

Now no men-made distinctions have any  
hold on me.

And I revel only in the gladness of my own  
welling love."

## MEETING OF THE TWO CIVILIZATIONS

When people meet it is but in the fitness of things that they start a give-and-take game in an imperceptible way even amidst heat and distrust and uncouth dealings. Bitter enmity unconsciously transforms into mutual understanding. A mist of forgetfulness gradually closes on the glare of hatred and a spirit of compromise, toleration and acceptance begins to interweave such a peculiar texture of ideas as to

1 Cf. 'Syncretism'—in *The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*.

set the curious observers groping for identification. The Islamic Pir is found to have been introduced and securely placed in the pantheon of Hindu god-heads. We are informed of an event of a similar nature: "The pointed arch and the half-domed porches and windows of Persian mosques were an adaptation of the niched shrines in which Buddhistic images were placed. The Mullahs having satisfied their conscience by destroying the hated images converted Buddhistic temples into mosques and adopted the empty niches as a symbol of the true faith, so that, gradually the niche with the pointed arch became an essential feature in the structure of the new Mahomedan buildings."<sup>1</sup>

### FADING AWAY OF OLD RIVALRY

Thus when long after a historian reads us a lecture, we nod our assent, get amused at the past horror and feel immensely thankful to Providence for having despatched the ugly details to oblivion. We become glad that a new era of union is ushered in. Indeed, as has been observed<sup>2</sup>: "Although each community must work out its generation according to its individual genius, yet none can afford to wrap itself in the mantle of a dead past without the fatal certainty of extinction." The happy

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1 E. B. Havell—History of Aryan Rule in India.

2 Amcer Ali—History of Saracens.

interchange of ideas that passed freely, and very often unconsciously, as a result of the contact, had thus been a providential scheme of evolution. The exchange of ideas in commercial and political relations as well as of theological ceremonies offered ample opportunities for mutually utilising cultural gifts. The points of resemblance as also of difference both had peculiar contributions for constructing a common good by liberating the creative minds of the old Hindus from the shackles of lifeless imitations and by introducing into the freshness of youthful Muslims the richness of a variegated experience. Goldenweiser<sup>1</sup> very truly remarks : "Historic borrowing is as constant and basic a process as growth from within. The civilizational role of borrowing is fundamental . . . Culture contact appears as the veritable yeast of history."

## LITERATURE

**Literary Trade between India and Arab :** Lights of Hindu wisdom illuminated various walks of Mahomedan thoughts. In Astronomy, Mathematics, Medicines, Architecture and Music, Islamic mind was touched to a vigorous activity by the golden wand of Hindu civilization. The pupil turned out a consummate master to educate all Europe in many branches of learning. Under the

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1 Early Civilization—Introduction.



patronage of the Khalifs of Baghdad, several 'Siddhants' of the Hindu Jyotisha were translated by the Arabs who during the 8th and 9th centuries were diligent students of the Aryans. It has been observed <sup>1</sup> —“The name ‘Algebra’, from Arabic *al jabr*, the reduction of parts to a whole or of fractions to integers, shows that Europe received Algebra alike the ten numerical symbols from the Hindus through the Arabs.” Further information goes <sup>2</sup>: “At the close of the 8th century A.D., according to Ibn Beithar and Albiruni, the work of Charaka, and according to Ibn Abi Usaibiah, the work of Suśruta also, were translated in Arabic.....The influence of Hindu medicine upon the Arabs in the first centuries of the *Hijra* was one of the very highest significance. The Khalifs of Baghdad caused a considerable number of works upon the subject to be translated.... Arabian medicine constituted the chief authority and guiding principle of European physicians down to the seventeenth century.” In this tireless work of translations there was a very large share of Indians residing at Baghdad. It is interesting to note that two Indians, Manka and Salih, were in the employ of Harunu-r Rashid as ‘body-physicians’. In the

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1 Monier-Williams—Hindu Wisdom ; those interested may consult Colebrook’s well-known article on ‘Algebra of the Hindus’.

2 Weber—The History of Indian Literature, pp. 266-70.

Khalifate of Al-Mamun,<sup>1</sup> Muhammad bin Musa composed a work on Algebra, and another on Medicine was prepared by Mikha and Ibn Dahan. Relating to Astronomy, the Arabs learned from Brahmagupta earlier than from Ptolemy.<sup>2</sup>

**Under the Sultans :** In the wake of Sultan Mahmud's *Jihād*, there came to India a great Mahomedan pundit with wonderful intellectual sympathies for the Hindu thoughts. He was Al 'Biruni. His quick and versatile talent enabled him to pick up with extreme rapidity a large amount of first-hand knowledge of India. At the same time, his deep and wide studies in Sanskrit philosophy, theology and astronomy were surprisingly free from predilection, and his learning was directed to build up a cultural understanding between the two races. It was a very bold idealism considering the atmosphere of fresh animosity. There were other students of the Hindu literature carrying on their works outside India. Some of them were—Muhammad bi Israil-al Tanukhi, Abu-Ma 'Shar and Ibn-al Baithar. Leaving these scholars, more or less belonging to foreign lands, we find learning and patronage for learning among some Sultans who sat on the throne of Delhi. Firoz Shah was one of them. He could choose the books and give directions for translating ..

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1 E.H.I., vol. v, Note D.

2 A.-B.I.—Preface

those. After the seige of Nagarkot<sup>1</sup>, a big Sanskrit library fell in his possession and he ordered Maulana Izzu-d din Khalid Khani to translate a work on philosophy, divination and omens. Ghiyasu-d din Muhammad Shah Khiliji got a book on veterinary science translated from Sanskrit. Occasionally, however, works were undertaken in a spirit of wounded pride as when Kurrutu-l Mulk,<sup>2</sup> in the preface to his translation of a Sanskrit medical book, said that it was rendered "from the barbarous Hindu into refined Persian in order that there may be no more need of a reference to infidels." But Amir Khasru<sup>3</sup>, the Persian poet of India, had the pleasure of confessing: "you will not find the Hindi language inferior to the Persian."

**Under the Great Mughals :** Coming to the Mughals we find that Babur himself was well-read and wrote with fastidious refinement. But he had very little admiration for this country and its literature. He told it candidly in his *Memoirs* which remains an excellent literary work. Akbar was no scholar like his father and grandfather. But he was a magnificent lover of culture, and possessed great wealth and a much greater heart while "he had the genius of taking pains and the open-mindedness which is symbolised by his

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1 Fa.

2 E.H.I., vol. v, Note D.

3 E.H.I., vol. iii, Appendix.

favourite motto, 'Peace with all'.<sup>1</sup> He adorned his court with men of many-sided accomplishments. Under his auspices Badauni translated into Persian the *Rāmāyana* of *Vālmīkī* and *Smṛhāsana Battisi*. Haji Ibrahim Sirindhi undertook to translate the Atharvaveda. Naqib Khan took over from Badauni the charge of his partly begun translation of the Mahābhārata<sup>2</sup> and continued the work giving it a new name—Razmnāmāh. Faizi translated Lilāvati's treatise on arithmetic and also composed, among other things, poems on Nala-o-Daman. The most whole-hearted unity-worker was prince Dara Sukoh. He got Persian translations of fifty Upaniṣads, which he called secret doctrines, the Bhāgavata Gitā and the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha. He pursued the enterprise of religious amalgamation with a rapturous devotion and terrible self-sacrifice. He himself compiled an anthology of parallel verses from the Vedānta and Sufism. It was grand in conception, industrious in execution, and the work bore the

1 E.I., see under Akbar.

2 A Bengali translation of the Mahabharata as far as Striparva was completed under Muslim patronage during the reign of Sultan Husen Saha (of Gour—1494-1525) who was an ardent believer in coalescing religious creeds and thus promulgated the mixed cult of Satya-Pir round which deity many Hindu and Muslim poets of Bengal created a voluminous literature. Vide—Dinesh Chandra Sen's History of Bengali Literature, pp. 201 and 796.

suggestive title—*Majma-ul-Bahrain*--the confluence of the two seas. In the matter of educating Mughal princes studies based on Sanskrit literature and sciences were considered advisable. Even the successor of Awrangzeb, Md. A'zam, was given lessons adapted from the *saṃgīt*, *alambkār*, and *koka śāstras* etc.

**With a Living Literature :** Apart from translation-works, the Mughal court gave much indulgence to Hindu authors in their writing lampoons and satires at the expense of royal personages and nobilities. This was surely the outcome of a nice spirit of mutual appreciation. Another significant achievement was the creation of an all-India *lingua franca*—the Urdu and the Hindusthani—following the establishment of an Islamic empire. Two causes co-operated. First, among the Mahomedans themselves of that age education in Persian was very rare, in Arabic rarer still.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, the new religious inspirations had to be preached in popular language. The Hindi literature attained a surpassing brilliance. The immortal poet of *Rām Charit Mānas* was not a product of the court but of the reign of Akbar. A great poet generally grows in a glorious age. Besides, though unknown to the monarch, he knew his love for

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<sup>1</sup> E.H.I., vol. iii, preface.

Hindu thought. So if there was no favour, there was no fear too : and Tulsi Dās quietly worked on the legend of Rāma, giving the multitude, to apply his own words, “a holy spiritual guide.”<sup>1</sup> A poet who had been in the court was Sur Dās, ‘the blind bard’. He had been, with his friend Miyan Tansen, one of the thirtysix musicians of the palace. The emperor’s *Kabī Kāī* (Hindu poet-laureate), however, was Raja Birbal, a witty story-teller, a jocular versifier, a fascinating conversationist and an interesting personality. Many Muslim authors also undertook to adorn the Hindi language. Nawaz, Jaisi and several others wrote their religious poems in *Brij Bhākhā*. Not only in language but in the spirit of literature too, the process of amalgamation was at work. This has attained a superb charm in some poets of our day. Satyendranath Dutta has used Persian words with delightfully musical effect, freely embellished his art with play of Iranian fancy and, where necessary, enveloped the whole scene with a picturesque magnificence of the *Badshahi* atmosphere. On the other hand, Mohsin Kakori, in writing a poem in praise of the Prophet, has evident pleasure in introducing ample Sanskrit metaphors and indulged in lovely imageries of *Vaisnava* myths. The book in question opens with the description of the pageant

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1 Tulsi Das—Book iv, Doha 18—Grierson’s translation.

of rain-clouds rising up at Kashi and moving on towards Muttra and the conveyance of the Ganges water by the morning wind holding on the shoulder of lightning.

## ARCHITECTURE

### **Beyond Her Borders in Earlier Days :**

Not only in philosophy and literature but also in the arena of all arts and aesthetics there was an irresistible inter-communication. In plastic arts and crafts India had enchanting gifts. Long before the Sultans occupied the throne of Delhi, Indian art had travelled down to Arab. Having observed that "the description given by Arab writers of *Kaaba* strongly suggests a Buddhist monastery filled with Mahāyana images," Havell<sup>1</sup> points out : "Saracenic architecture had not developed into an independent style before Islam began to draw upon the artistic resources of India in the same way as it had borrowed Indian science—mathematical, medicinal and astronomical—to build up the schools for which Arab culture became famous in Europe." Years later when the implacable temple-destroyer Sultan Mahmud was busy plying between Ghazna and India, he felt immensely impressed<sup>2</sup> by the skill of

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1 E. B. Havell—A Handbook of Indian Art.

2 cf. A.-B. I., vol. ii, p. 144—appreciation of the Hindu construction of holy ponds.

Indian craftsmen. Many of them were taken away as slaves and captives. They were given separate localities to settle at Ghazna, and were allowed to follow their own religious practices so that they could work free from embarrassments in constructing mosques and royal edifices.

**Under the Sultans :** Indo-Saracenic architecture appeared in the 13th century. The great mosque at Ajmere and mosque Qutb-al Islam at Delhi with Qutb Minār reveal a synthetic talent. There is plenty of originality even in the conception of beauty growing out of venturesome combinations. Old Delhi is good enough in offering numerous "examples of Hindu art applied to Mahomedan purposes."<sup>1</sup> In fact,<sup>2</sup> "The craftsmen of these Indo-Mahomedan courts began to revive their finest tradition of Hindu culture in their wonderful mosques, palaces, public gardens, wells, bathing-places and irrigation works consecrated, as of old, to the service of the One God whom Brahmans worshipped as *Iśvara* or *Nārāyaṇa* or Muhammadans as *Allah*.....This new Islamic culture, which began when Mahmud of Ghazni made the royal craftsmen of Mathura and Kanouj build for him the mosque of the 'Celestial Bride,' is

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1 Fergusson—History of Indian and Eastern Architecture, vol. ii

2 E. B. Havell—History of Aryan Rule in India, p. 327.



in everything but name a Hindu renaissance. Ahmedabad, the capital of Muhammadan Guzrat, was created by the royal craftsmen of Rajputana ; Gaur of Muhammadan Sultans was a new Lakhnauti ; Benares was the mother of Jaunpur." The exuberance of life of the conquerors gave a new urge to the creative forces of the conquered, and a brilliant career of rejuvenation set in. Following the disintegration of the Turkish Sultanate of Delhi there grew up various provincial techniques, chief among them being Jaunpur, Bengal, Gujerat and Bijapur.

**Under the Great Mughals :** With the overthrow of the Afgan rule and the triumph of Mughals, another fresh and mightier wave of creation was moving onward. Babur was a poet. His master passion in art was laying out gardens. He paid little attention to architecture, and even in that, as he had no high opinion for things Indian, he imported the pupils of Sinan, the famous Ottoman architect, to supervise and direct the many Indians employed. Humayun had a restless fortune and could have no leisure for indulging in elaborate tastes. The greatest of the Mughals was a truant boy. Yet he was the biggest patron of learning, the originator of a daring novelty in religion, a believer in the sovereignty of culture, the founder of a

co-operative tradition in political administration, a lover of music, an admirer of paintings and an enthusiast in architecture. Akbar the great was Asoka the great reborn. This mighty monarch wanted to build "a duplicate of the Holy Place." Accordingly he struck out the idea of the mosque at Fatehpur Sikri. Its general plan obeyed the dictates of Islamic ritual. But the whole thing was invested with a decided Indian expression and looked more like a Viṣṇu temple<sup>1</sup> than an orthodox Islamic construction. The emperor loved the land he reconquered, and was the first to live here as an Indian absolutely at home. So we find that although he secured the services of Yusuf, the favourite student of Sinan, his palaces at Fatehpur Sikri, "a romance in stone",<sup>2</sup> have enough of Indian elements to make a connoisseur exclaim<sup>3</sup>: "This touch of fancy, these pieces of sheer bravura, which are incompatible with Persian classicism, are directly derived from Hindu

1 E. B. Havell—A Handbook of Indian Art.

2 Vincent A. Smith—Akbar the Great Moghul, p. 445; see also his remark on the tomb of Shaikh Salim Chisti at Fatehpur Sikri: "It is surprising to find unmistakable Hindu features in the architecture of the tomb of a most zealous Musalman Saint, but the whole structure suggests Hindu feeling, and nobody can mistake the Hindu origin of the columns and struts of the porch."—p. 442.

3 Rene Grousset—Civilization of Far East—India.

and Jain art." Again, Akbar's tomb<sup>1</sup> at Sikandara<sup>a</sup> was "a direct imitation of some such buildings as the old Buddhist *Vihāras*" and thus took the beautiful appearance of "the great rath at Mamallapuram." The grandest gift of the Mughal architect is a wonder of the world. It is the sweet and solemn shrine raised in memory of Shajahan's beloved wife Mumtaz Mahall, representing her ethereal grace of form and overpowering with the lyrical association of her sacred conjugal love. It is the devoted monarch's direction of an art in dream recalling Mumtaz Mahall herself whose blooming beauties mingle in the varying expressions that come over the marvellous scene. It is she who becomes revealed when the radiance of the early dawn kisses the silvery dewes with which the lovely relic is bathed, when the sullen rays of the mid-day sun charge the atmosphere with an utterly forlorn feeling, when the weary evening draws a thin veil of pathetic mystery, when

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1 Tombs of prophets and saints—only such as at Kerbela and Meshed—are extremely rare in Arabia and Persia while these are found in very large numbers in Central Asia and in India, the greater ones of the latter country being the mausoleum of the Chisti family at Ajmere and of Nizamuddin at Delhi. This indicates a Buddhist influence. Muhammadan architecture freely used the Buddhist Stupa-dome as a representation of a relic shrine or a tomb.—The History of the Great Mughals by Pringle Kennedy, vol. i.

2 Fergusson—History of Indian and Eastern Architecture, vol. ii, pp. 300-302.

the flood of the full-moon-light flows with the eddies of love's fragrant reflection. Its principal architect was Ustad 'Isha but at least for the gorgeous dome in it, the older Dravidian and Buddhist types, and for the ground plan the old Hindu *panch-ratna* were responsible. Besides, the Taj, like the Gol Gumbuz of Adil Shah, have the Hindu symbol of *Mahapadma* or lotus crown.<sup>1</sup>

## PAINTING

**Mughal Painting :** In the field of other fine arts too the patronage of the Mughal court, from Humayun to Shajahan, directly encouraged an intimate association. Painting woke up in the halo of a crimson dawn. The earliest display of Indo-Moslem painting was initiated by the school of that superb painter of the East, Bihzad, who made a subtle blending of the Persian with the Chinese style. With the Iranian and Central Asian, the Indian tradition came to be mingled through the Rajput painters who inherited to some extent the wealth of Ajanta and Bagh. Delicately harmonised out of the mellowed mixture of so many elements grew the Mughal painting, and before long it

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. 'At the coronation of King Edward VII, to the other devices of the Imperial mantle, the lotus flower was added as a symbol for India.'—The Heritage of Dress by Wilfred Mark Webb.

acquired an illusive individuality of its own. During his exile in Persia, Humayun learnt drawing and painting. He brought his master to India with him and continued taking lessons along with his son. Akbar and Jahangir maintained quite a good number of Musalman and Hindu painters. In the reign of Akbar the following artists were among the most famous—Khwaja Abd-al Samad of Shiraj (the pupil of Bihzad), Farrukh-bey, Daswanth, Basawan, Kesu or Kesave, Madhu, Muskin, Mukund, Ramdas, Bhagvati. In Jahangir and Shajahan's courts other masters also got in—Hunhar, Samand, Anupchitar, Chitarman, Monohar Sigh, Mansur, Muhammad Afzal, Muhammad Nadir of Samarkand, Mir Hashim Dhan Sah.

**Influence of the Court :** Mughal art introduced a special treatment of landscape painting which in the Indian schools always remained a background. It had, again, a fond attachment for studies of animals. Besides, it cherished a readiness to portray Sadhus and Dervishes in which the spiritual quality of the Ajanta tradition prevailed. Some original styles of Hindu dancing also were appropriated in good graces by the Mughal school. Yet the Mughal art, depending on the blessings of the court, was chiefly drawn to the portrayals of royal heroes and prominent aristocrats. Working under this inspiration,

in fundamental elements it could not belong to the people at large. Its supreme grandeur and strange beauties could only make the people gazing with admiration from a distance. The elevated atmosphere prevented their enjoying it thoroughly. So it failed to bear the shock of Awrangzeb's puritanic interdict and could ill afford to stand the strain of clumsy government of weaklings who followed that last of the Great Mughals. Naturally, therefore, after a short-lived splendour its purple flowers began to droop and silently withered away with a pathetic gloom too soon swallowing up its flush of novelty.

### **The Steadier Course of the Rajput Schools:**

The Rajput Schools, on the contrary, were fed by the bounties of the multitude. Deeply rooted at this level of perennial supply, the Rajput painting catered for the popular fancies. In elegant lines, in bold tints and in relieving shades it drew such pictures as rouse deeper emotions of human mind in its essential wants by a felicitous co-ordination of ennobling religion and innocent eroticism. One should understand that in nearly all superior works of Indian art <sup>1</sup> "there runs a vein of deep sex-mysticism.....The interplay of all psychic and physical sexual forces is felt in itself to be religious. Already we find in one of the earliest Upanishads:

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<sup>1</sup> A. Coomarswamy—Arts and Crafts in India and Ceylon.

'For just as one who dallies with a beloved wife has no consciousness of outer and inner, so the spirit also, dallying with the self-whose-essence-is-knowledge, has no consciousness of outer and inner.'

.....It is thus that the imager.....set side by side on his cathedral walls the *yogi* and the *apsarā*, the saint and the ideal courtesan; accepting life as he saw it, he interpreted all its phenomena with perfect catholicity of vision."

**Happy Interaction :** It is only superfluous to mention that there were charming touches of Mughal embellishments even in these rather purely Rajput paintings which had two main divisions. One was the Rajasthani group, the chief of which was known as the *Jeypur qalam*, the other was the Pahari group best represented by the *Kangra qalam*. The Hindu and the Muslim schools worked in close collaboration and their ideas and techniques often became overlapping. Akbar took enormous pleasure in making Indian artists interpret in pictures Moslem works of literature and Moslem artists do the same with Indian works. In this way, of mutually supplementing the artistic talents of the two races and of clearing the way for a rich harmony in all avenues of culture and imagination, were illustrated the stories from the

Persian *Shāhnāmāhs* and Hindu *Razmnāmāh*,  
*Rāmāyana*, *Naldaman*, *Kāliyadaman*, etc.

### COSTUMES

The study of pictures throws a good deal of light on the subject of costumes. Mughal painting was very realistic and the dresses we see therein tell a lot. During the rule of Sultans, the Mahomedans wore mostly Persian garments and indulged in more or less Iranian manners. Dress is intimately related to the minds of people and indicates which way their civilization is moving.<sup>1</sup> The Mughal emperors from Akbar largely adopted Indian modes and tastes. The appearance and style of Akbar, as the portraits speak, remarkably differs from that of any of his predecessors. One is surprised to find : "Gone is the rakish high-peaked cap, the *Kulāh* of the Turkoman, and in its place is the closely bound turban, or *Chīrā* of the Indian Rajput. Gone is the free-grown beard of the orthodox Musalman, and in its place is the shaven chin with the side-whisker, or *galmuchh*, of the Muttra Hindu."<sup>2</sup> From a further review of prevailing fashions a difference in favour of the Indian influence becomes evident. It has been noticed that "the Mughal turbans differ from contemporary Bokhara types in

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1 Dr. R. L. Mitra—*Indo-Aryan*, vol. i, p. 166.

2 Percy Brown—*Indian Painting under the Mughals*, p. 150.



not having the loose fringed ends sticking out on both sides; they are smaller and neater . . . The skirt, bodice, and veil of Rajput ladies prevailed in the Mughal zenanas of the 17th century, but with constant change of fashion in respect of details.”<sup>1</sup> In beauties of dressing the hair, the Hindu woman tied it in decorative patterns and held it tight over her head while the Musalman style was to weave the hair in a wavy plait and keep it swinging playfully. Men combined the Hindu with the Muslim mode of dressing through a long course of gradual compromise of local suitability and court usage. The present compromise in this respect has impaired elegance and character. There is now a medley of oddities in Hindu clothes while “Nothing was more graceful than the white flowing robes of the old fashioned Musalman which the ‘advanced’ youth of our day replaces by a caricature of an Englishman’s frock-coat and wears the Egyptian fez in place of the healthier and more dignified turban.”<sup>2</sup>

## MUSIC

**Conception of Music :** The sage of the Atharvaveda wondered<sup>3</sup> “who it was that gave man his music. Birds repeat their single notes or a

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1 A. Coomarswamy—Arts and Crafts in India and Ceylon.

2 William Crooke—Things Indian.

3 R. M., pp. 151-52.

very simple combination of them, but man builds his world of music and establishes ever new rhythmic relationship of notes. These reveal to him a universal mystery of creation which cannot be described. They bring to him the inner rhythm that transmutes facts into rhythm." The Islamic imagination also had a peculiar susceptibility to music. Sings the 'Whirling Sufist':<sup>1</sup>

"Though earth and water have cast their  
veil upon us  
We retain faint reminiscences of these  
heavenly songs;  
But while we are thus shrouded by gross  
earthly veils,  
How can the tones of the dancing spheres  
reach us?"

**Early Traffic in Music:** Quite in the fitness of things, music was another very prominent factor of the culture-contact. A love of music quivered in dulcet notes throughout the entire range of Sanskrit literature, and the Vedic sages as well as the Classic poets made the sky and the earth, the forest and the rill, the whole atmosphere echo in exquisite tunes. Music along with dance<sup>2</sup> was a special branch of

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1 Jalal-ud-Din Rumi—Masnavi—Whinfield's translation.

2 A. V.—x, 8, 43. cf. Ain-i-Akbari which relates various dexterous dances practised by women in Guzrat and Malwa; also see The Music of Hindustan by A. H. Fox-Strangways.

study—the Gandharvaveda, supposed to be an appendix to the Sāmaveda. Gandharvas and Apsarās<sup>1</sup> were celestial musicians<sup>2</sup> and dancers, and as such they were hailed as teachers of this art. Seven notes of music are mentioned in the Chhandaśāstra of Pingala. These notations<sup>3</sup> travelled down to the Persians who again taught the Arabs, and corresponding to the Indian : sa re ga ma pa dha ni, we have in Persian : da re mi fa sa la be. Islam, in its turn, after the fall of the Roman Empire and the establishment of Muslim supremacy in Spain imparted a considerable education in music to whole Europe.

**In India Under the Muslim Monarchs :**  
In mediaeval India, the history of music came to be written in the reign of Tughluq Sultans. Particular forms of singing were in vogue in particular parts of the country. Delhi had much fancy for *Kheyāl* and *Terenā*. These<sup>4</sup> were “composed by Ameer Khosru of Dehly . . . . They were a delightful mixture

1 A. V., iv, 37, 5.

2 Most of the technical terms used by the Arab musicians are borrowed from the Persian and Indian languages. In the use of musical instruments too the Muhammadans of India adopted many Hindu things. Some of these were—Banshee, Been, Dhol, Goonghroo, Khunjuree, Meerdung, Munjeera, Ragmala (Piano), Saringi, Sunkh, Surod, etc.—vide, Cyclopaedia of India, Vol. II.

3 Weber—History of Indian Literature—authority of Von Bohlen and Benfey quoted therein. 4 A. A., Part II.

of the Persian and Hindovee style." Under the patronage of the Mughal Courts, redolent with luxury of all forms and fashions, glowing with a highly developed artistic sense and bursting into a creative vigour in all directions, the Hindus and Musalmans set together to contribute freely to the extraordinary perfection of music and entered into bold experiments with marvellous success. Emperor Akbar is associated with a number of inventions generally known as *Akbari tunes*. His Majesty was so much ravished with the *Kānāḍā* that he felt curious in enriching it even further, and thus was evolved the majestic *Darbāri Kānāḍā*. Emperor Sajahan caused to be collected a thousand Dhrupad songs in Hindi and the work was entitled *Hazar Dhrupad*.

**In the Era of Misfortunes :** Music was buried deep in the regime of Awrangzeb whose moral rage was responsible for choking the fountain of many other fine arts. A story is often related :<sup>1</sup>

"One day a number of singers and minstrels gathered together with great cries, and having filled up a bier with a good deal of display, round which were grouped the public wailers, they passed under the Emperor's *Jharokha-i-darsan*, or interview

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1 E. H. I., vol. vii, p. 283.

window. When he enquired what was intended by their bier and the show, the minstrels said that music was dead, and they were carrying his corpse for burial. Aurangzeb then directed them to place it deep in the ground, that no sound or cry might afterwards arise from it."

**Back to Love and Life :** Mohammad Shāh Rangilé is credited to have revived the dead and dying melodies. This restoration was noteworthy. In the spheres of *kheyāl*, *toppā* and *thoomrī*, achievements had been wonderful. The deeper harmonies of religious songs—more sombre than delicate—wrung out of the passionate heart of the Vedic mystics, could not fully renew their good old grandeur. Yet they were at least brought round to a self-knowing state of existence. It is hoped and prayed that this history of the death and rebirth of music may work as an emblem of lost love regained between Hindus and Muslims of our ancient land of ever-living civilization, and may inspire us with a faith in full possibilities of further reunion culminating in the formation of a common national life sustaining and developing our individual greatness.

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## COMMON BELIEFS IN INDO-MAHOMEDAN THEOLOGIES

Time is a wonderful artist. It has, however, a dual aspect. Sometimes a wealth of diverse elements are brought round to build up a lovely harmony. Sometimes, again, a settled peace begins to diverge. The methodical march of events sinks into a dismal chaos when man flatly yields to his "possessive" <sup>1</sup> impulses. The desire to grow by acquiring at the expense of others becomes a grim obsession. The overwhelming greed of what is called practical gain overrides the joyous motive of life. And then the ordered progress breaks into an amazing dissolution. But in no case of the reshuffling of human civilization does it sacrifice any details. They are all controlled or relaxed with a plot and a vision. What appears a chaotic mass of matter is, through a series of events, gradually moulded into a more or less organised form. And the many lines and colours are dominated to behave in such a co-ordination as to evolve an unmistakable life-principle. This expression of harmony is not left to speculation. A rhythmic co-operation of a variety of civilizations is

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<sup>1</sup> Bertrand Russel—Principles of Social Reconstruction.

naturally operated by virtue of the "life-promoting tendency"<sup>1</sup> inherent in the very function of creation.

When Islam came to stay in Hindustan, on the background of opposition, a spirit of sympathy was slowly emerging out till at length the latent similarities started their play. It is a fine mood of imagination to review the two creeds. They were, as indeed all other religions always are, born with many striking common characteristics along with their distinctions which usually impart to anything its own mark of individuality. While differences began to be pronounced, identities also came to be not less manifested. Abiding in the very original conceptions, philosophical and theological, these common truths would have afforded complete mutual trust. But much good was lost. The political antagonisms of a victor and a victim naturally provoked a perverted feeling. Not only they took pleasure in suppressing to each other the fact of subscribing to innumerable corresponding beliefs but also found relief in declaring that no likeness between them could ever be supposed to have existed. Yet on a careful examination, a bewildering lot of similar ideas reveal themselves. These are evident in various terms and practices as well as in the articles of faith

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<sup>1</sup> That is how Nietzsche characterises Art.

and theories of metaphysics belonging to the two creeds.

Let us compare a few terms first of all. At the very outset, the names of the scriptures may well be discussed.

The word 'Qur'an' comes from *karaa*, to cry. To think aloud is an ancient virtue. The primeval simplicity of feeling coupled with passionate yearning for spiritual life made the early god-loving people break into emotional alleluia. Many instances can be found in the 'Śruti' where the gods are invoked with burning heart and in loud tone.<sup>1</sup> The early Aryans also occasionally practised the congregational form of worship.<sup>2</sup> Again, as the Qur'an literally means recitation, the Śruti also has the same shade of meaning in that it is called *Chhandas*.<sup>3</sup> Also the expression *gih*, is often used to refer to the singing feature of the Śruti or Veda.<sup>4</sup>

'Islam' is derived from the root *salama* expressing obedient submission to God.<sup>5</sup> Sanskrit OM suggests the same idea. It is explained as 'yes, verily, so be it',<sup>6</sup> and as 'mystic name of God'.<sup>7</sup>

1 A. V. ii, 12, 3.

2 R. V., x, 191.

3 Vide the Lexicon of Jatadhara, also the grammar of Panini—  
*bahulang chhandasi*—ii, 4, 73.

4 R. V. i- 166, 15.

5 Ency. Britannica.

6 Monier Williams' Dictionary.

7 Wilson's Dictionary.



The Śāstra thus defines it—" 'Om' means Brahma, 'Om' means all this. 'Om' means obedience. When they have been told 'Om' speak, they speak .... 'Om' may I acquire Brahma." <sup>1</sup>

'Knowledge' is classified by both in two groups :

- (i) *Itm* or *Jnāna*, meaning ordinary knowledge.
- (ii) *Ma'rifat* or *Chetanā*, meaning refined and intuitive vision.

'Salaam' the term of greeting means 'peace be with you', 'secure'. Hindu greetings 'Āsis' 'Anā-maya' etc. denote the very same idea and feeling.

The Persian 'Dervish', Arabic 'Faqir', the Buddhist 'Bhikshu', and the 'Pravrajyā' stage of the Vedic Āsramas \* of life, all relate more or less to the same spirit of a dedicated life.

The 'Sunni' faith is an extreme attachment to rituals and other conservative principles while the 'Shia' is a break-away from the old school owing to a recognition of new truths and metaphysical interpretations on old saying, with an inclination towards mysticism. This difference very well compares with that between the 'Mimāṃsā' and

1 Tait. Up.—S. B. E.

2 *Bani bhutva pravrajat*—the roaming ascetic after the stage of retirement into the forest.

the 'Vedānta' schools of Hinduism. The Shia faith has been characterised <sup>1</sup> as an "elastic development sublimated by the mysticism of Persia and refined by the subtleties of Indian philosophy."

The Arabic word 'Shair' and the Sanskrit word 'Kavi' both mean, in addition to rhymers, 'one who perceives'. Thus the bard and the seer mingle in the personality of the poet. There is, however, one difference between Arabic and Sanskrit notion of a poet. The Qur'an <sup>2</sup> speaks of bad poets 'who err' and good poets 'who believe and remember God most'. In the Vedas, however, the poet is always an object of the highest reverence. Even God has been frequently called 'kavi.' On the other hand, there is a further point of similarity. Among the Arabs of early days the poet of a tribe, <sup>3</sup> on the day of battle, was invested with the duties of exciting the army with powerful metrical compositions. He stood before them and lashed them into fury with taunting verses. The ironical words with which he abused and ridiculed the enemies were believed to be charged with magical potency. Nearly the same practice prevailed in ancient India. Hymns are not rare in the Vedas which have undergone gradual

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1 Sir William Muir—Annals of Early Caliphate.

2 Qrn., xxvi, 224-28.

3 D. B. MacDonald—The Religious Attitude and Life in Islam.

transformation from a real war song into a mystical battle charm.<sup>1</sup>

Some theological beliefs and general ideals in common with the Hindus and the Musalmans may now be discussed. To begin with the very beginning.

**Belief in God :** The personification of Śraddhā as the deity of religious faith of the Vedas is a lovely poetic truth. Śraddhā, the daughter of Surya, is imagined by Ṛṣi Madhuchchhandā<sup>2</sup> as dealing out to all humanity the Soma wine which is foaming forth in all directions, having clarified it by means of the eternal sieve of ship's wool.<sup>3</sup> The Gītā<sup>4</sup> extols faith as the primary requisition for knowledge. This intuitive belief in God is frequently inculcated in the Qur'an.<sup>5</sup> Whoever believes in Allah and the Judgment after death will be entitled to the divine favour. No fear shall come upon him neither shall he grieve. It may be noted in passing that in the period of the great Upaniṣads the Aryans maintained a perfect balance of faith and wisdom. The instinctive belief in God was thoroughly educated in the school of refined intellectualism. The frank and full-flavoured criticism of the intellect,

<sup>1</sup> M. Winternitz—Indian Literature, vol. 1.

<sup>2</sup> R. V., ix, 1, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Śraddhā suggests religious faith, Surya—light i.e. knowledge, Soma—the joyous elixir of supreme realization, wool—religious observances. cf. this wool with that worn by the Sūfis.

<sup>4</sup> Gita, iv, 39.

<sup>5</sup> Qrn., ii, 59.

however, gradually proved out of order with the generation of decay and disorder. The author of the Gita could perceive what was going on but he could only make a patch-work and alternately spoke of the supremacy of faith, wisdom and service in exclusive terms.<sup>1</sup>

**Revelation :** Revealed truths are claimed to be told by both the creeds. The Qur'an is referred to as being emanated from God.<sup>2</sup> So also the Vedas say—"From Him sprang the R̥c and Sāman verses ; from Him sprang the metres ; from Him the Yajus arose."<sup>3</sup> The Qur'an<sup>4</sup> frequently speaks of revelations. The Hindu Śāstras are too full of allusions to revelation. The Vedānta defines the Veda as revealed truths about religion and God ; the Nyāya-sūtra calls the Śruti as the sayings of God. Again, Islam styles itself 'the standard religion'<sup>5</sup> just as Hinduism insists on being accepted as the *Sanātana Dharma*. The Mimāṃsā, particularly, upholds the eternity of the Vedas. Furthermore, the Qur'an<sup>6</sup> has been called "the Book without doubt." The same demand of reverence is put forward by the Hindu Śāstras. The Vedas acknowledge no outside authority and reveal truths that are self-proved.<sup>7</sup>

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1 This led to the universal popularity of the Gita.

2 Qrn. iv, 84.

4 Qrn. ii, 46 ; xiv, 1 ; xxxix, 24.

6 Qrn.—Surah ii.

3 R. V. x, 90.

5 Qrn. xxx, 29.

7 Samkhya Sutra, 51.

The supreme authority of the Vedas depends upon its own eternal faultlessness.<sup>1</sup> The orthodox view maintains with voluminous arguments that the Vedas are absolutely free of errors.<sup>2</sup>

**Prayer :** Prayer is an emotional yielding to the idea of God. Overwhelmed with the immensity of nature and mocked with the playful indifference of fate, man looks up to find out a secure relationship with something that is supreme and unfailing in protecting him in his helplessness during the intervals of flickering flashes of glory. There is a playful force of irony in the creation. It so much upsets man's equanimity and self-confidence that God has got to exist in order to afford him a sense of relief. He shouts out to that 'Holder of the rod' and offers his prayers to that Power which fulfils all desires, grants victory in the battle of life, dominates over all evils and drives away all sins.<sup>3</sup> He is approached through prayers and good deeds. This prayer is a form of solemn recognition and a willing self-abandonment to the mysterious might of God. It is expected to confer strength and purity to thought and work, and thereby assure His pleasure in favour of him who prays either in fear or in love. The Prophet has impressed the idea on his followers that

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1 Kusumanjali by Udayana.

2 Jaimini Mimamsa.

3 S. V., iv, 4, 3.

prayer keeps a man free from filthy actions and wards off guilty desires. <sup>1</sup> Similarly the Vedic sage worships his God so that he may not get into any sin whatever. <sup>2</sup>

**Remembering the name of God :** Prayer is sometimes uttered in a loud voice with a ring of passionate feeling. Sometimes, again, this feeling, in the fulness of realization or in a conscious effort to attain that state of mind, is hushed into a secret silence. Then, hymns—often in symbolic expression—are pondered over recurringly. This mental repetition of God's name helps concentration as well as inspires one with the delight of having a concealed treasure. Besides, it also gives one more time before one is run down with fatigue or feels tempted to be spectacular than in the case of articulate prayers. The Qur'an has described its virtue with significant simplicity : "The remembrance of God is a great thing." <sup>3</sup> This 'remembering' has been explained <sup>4</sup> as consisting in the reiteration of the names of God and certain formulas. The Sufis call it *dhikr*. The Aryan scriptures also speak of the realization of God as joy itself that comes of constant thinking over the texts of the Śāstras. <sup>5</sup> The Hindu manner of frequently practising *japa*, mentally repeating the

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1 Qrn., xxxix, 44.

2 A. V., V, 3, 3.

3 Qrn., xxiv, 44.

4 Hughes' Dictionary of Islam, p. 703.

5 Br. S., i, 12.

name or the symbolic substitute of God, and observing prayer in regular hours of early dawn, noon and sunset are too well known to enter into any detail. <sup>1</sup> The Islamic custom equally recognises the merit of remembering Allah often and worshipping Him at regular hours of day and night. <sup>2</sup> Hindu mystics speak of a peculiar type of *mantra* known as *ajapā* which is done in course of each involuntary inspiration and expiration. <sup>3</sup>

**Tradition:** Accumulated customs form the supplementary authority in social, legal and ritualistic laws in both the religious orders. No less an influential text than the *Manusmṛti*, as narrated by Bhṛgu, traces its origin to the remote authority of Svāyambhava Manu, in parts, of Bṛddha Manu. In the same way *Hadis* and *Sunna* or customs and traditions formed the basis of the reputed canonical books of Bukhari and of Muslim. <sup>4</sup> The primary thing about Islam is the belief that the Qur'an represents the revealed truths. These were to guide human conduct in religious as well as secular lines. It, however, did not take too long to feel that unthought-of situations were appearing. Gradually it became seriously embarrassing. The new difficulties

1 Katyayana Samhita, xi, 8.

2 Qrn., xxxiii, 41.

3 It represents the sound of *So'ham* or *hamsah*.

4 Babinger's article on Islam in Prof. Carl Clemen's *Religions of the World*.

demanded solutions. When provisions of the Qur'an failed to cover the whole area of ever-growing problems, some device had to be introduced. The theologians had recourse to the Sunna of Muhammad.<sup>1</sup> Thus, in order to satisfy the inquisitive followers and to set at rest the many ritualistic disputes, the saying and practice of the Prophet were accepted as a supplement of the Qur'an. The stories of the life of the Prophet largely occupied the thoughts of the faithful, and gave the desired relief to the law-givers. Tradition was then raised to a great height and was looked up to with a veneration that had till now been exclusively enjoyed by the divine revelation. The binding force of the Smṛtis also came to be regarded with an awe due to 'unerring heavenly guidance' although theoretically they were obeyed to the extent they followed the Śrutis.

**Asceticism :** The Islamic observance, especially the Sufi doctrine, of poverty, asceticism, self-mortification and meditation may well be compared to what is found in Hinduism. The Patanjali Darśana<sup>2</sup> lays down that religious observances should be particularly concerned with purification of the mind, mortification of the body, recitation of scriptures and resignation to the will of God. The

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1 Sir W. Muir—The Life of Mohammed.

2 Y. S., ii, 32.



same is repeated in the Purāṇas.<sup>1</sup> The Jains, in explaining the term *Kevala*, refers to the pure and absolute knowledge for the sake of which spiritual thinkers perform varieties of penance and austerities.

**Esoteric Doctrines :** Ibn Khaldun, the author of the Universal History, in describing the characteristics of Sufism, speaks of ecstatic utterance, the underlying significance of which is intelligible to the initiated only. This is by no means a mannerism. It may be noted in this connection that in all mystic poetry too, an element of the unintelligible becomes inevitable. There are times when poets feel bound to abandon themselves to what may seem unmeaning expressions. It so happens when they deal with dim realizations beyond the ordinary light of simple consciousness. Human minds admit of such hazy experiences as occasionally escape the grip of definite and accurate observations. Nevertheless, by virtue of true emotions, their words at such times acquire subtle shades of meaning, unusual depth of import and wonderful boldness of suggestion. Similarly, the religious mystics among the Hindus, when getting past the realm of ordinary sense-existence, failed to put their extraordinary feelings in a matter-of-fact manner. Sometimes, they would rather prefer a jargon to a plain statement. Generally,

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1 V. P., vi, 7, 37.

they would use symbolic terms to explain their inner spiritual communions. Thus the Upaniṣads speak of *iti rahasyam*, *iti upaniṣadam*—this mystery, this secret session. As an instance of an expression having special deeper significance the term ‘truth of truth’<sup>1</sup> may be quoted which to the initiate means ‘the Highest Being.’ The Qur’an often refers to the idea of its being ‘secret’. Now, Upaniṣad, literally meaning ‘to sit near’, signifies mystery e.g. the mystical connotation of the word ‘Om’.

**Vision of the Unseen :** The transcendental view of things has been the concern of a class of imaginative enquirers of the spiritual world. The Upaniṣad says : “Thou who nourishest the earth, who walkest alone, O Sun, withdraw thy rays, reveal exceeding beauty and let me realize that the Person who is there is the One who I am”.<sup>2</sup> Mystic seekers of the divine truth feel agonised at the elusive nature of what is too palpable and eagerly look beyond the merely manifest in order to discover the ‘light that never was on sea or land’. In times of awful intensity the unseen source of the infinite joy becomes revealed. But such a state of bliss does not linger long, nor in the nature of things can it possibly be tolerated for long. Thus the Qur’an

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1 Br. Ak. Up.—ii, 1, 20 ; ii, 3, 6.

2 Isa Up—15, 16.

speaks : "We have taken the veil off thee, and thy sight today is piercing." <sup>1</sup> This piercing sight has been otherwise described by the great German philosopher, Jean Paul Richter, as the 'persecution of the infinite'. The cosmic revelation of God, narrated with rare imaginative splendour in the Gītā <sup>2</sup> may be referred to in this connection. Yet a moment of this bliss is a maddening delight, and mystic minds constantly yearn after a glimpse of the unknown. This unveiling of the unseen is, as Khaldun notes, a distinct feature of Sufism which so much commends the vision of the heart—*ru' yat al-qulb*. The Śruti also is replete with the idea that this minute super-soul is knowable by intuition. <sup>3</sup> Baffled though in the attempt of gaining any definite knowledge or communicable information of God, the Aryan sage feels an unanalysable bliss of divine communion. <sup>4</sup>

**Kinship of Man with the Maker :** God reveals Himself through the visible universe. In the act of creation, which instead of being attended with any strain is but an easy manifestation, the Maker has neither to go abegging for materials that are not within Him nor anything exists outside Him. The creation emerges from within the being of God. So

<sup>1</sup> Qrn—1, 21.

<sup>3</sup> Mdk. Up—iii, 1, 9.

<sup>2</sup> Gita—Chp. xi.

<sup>4</sup> Tait. Up., Brahnavalli, 4.

man is essentially composed of the same elements that God Himself represents. This fundamental oneness of man and the Maker renders it natural as well as possible that man desires to know Him, love Him and feel his whole existence within Him. Otherwise it would be sheer absurdity and painful mockery to think of seeking joy in the love of God and to try to realize the spiritual purpose with which all life is animated. This innate assurance of being at home with God—the very first inspiration for all spiritual adventures and the last solace of material miseries—has been surely felt and clearly told by the seekers of divine truth. Bayazid says : “He who discusses eternity must have within him the lamp of eternity.” This very fine philosophy, expressed with a conviction of feelings, is manywhere seen in the Śruti. The question has a dual aspect, and from both ends the answer has been drawn. The Brhadāranyaka observes that he who knows Brahma, the eternal one, has already become Brahma. The Vedāntasāra supplements the observation with the reverse order of the saying that he becomes Brahma who knows Brahma. Both Patanjali and Sufi philosophy maintain very nearly identical views<sup>1</sup> in respect of meditation on truth and sameness with God.

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1 Al 'Biruni notices this.

**Inspiration :** Divine influence has always been at work in the search and find of all great and good thoughts. Scriptures are particularly composed in moments of mystic transports and not by dint of hard and painfully conscious efforts. *Soma* is praised in the Vedas as the leader of poets.<sup>1</sup> The sages drink the heavenly elixir of *Soma* and poured out inspired utterances. Similarly, inspiration had a great part to play in preaching the Qur'an. The Prophet was directly infused with the thought of God. We are further told that one of the chief characteristics of Sufism was uttering wild speeches overflowing in ecstasy as of drunkenness.<sup>2</sup> And here it may be observed that in Sufism the breath of the Vedāntic philosophy was an important animating factor.<sup>3</sup>

**Miracle :** All religions recognize miracle, and all races revel in its performances. It is to be noted that there is a puzzlingly remarkable similarity between a Hindu *Yogī* and a Muslim *Faquir*. They could be hardly differentiated were it not for the distinction observed in dresses. The traveller Ibn Batuta had occasions to gain strange experience of Hindu *Yogīs* which so much impressed him as to

1 R. V., i, 91, 2.

2 *Shatahat*—as noticed by Khaldun.

3 A.-B. I.—Preface.

make him rather inclined to take them as Muslim Faquirs in disguise.

**Magic charms :** In formulas and in religious applications relating to the magic rites all nations seem to share in a common conception. People curiously dissimilar in character and widely separated by vast gulf of time happen to trade in rather a universal stock of magic charms. <sup>1</sup> The Atharva-veda, for the greater part of it, is a text for the knowledge and use of magic. There are two divisions—the holy and the black magic. The Muslims also entertain a religious faith in magical contrivances. The fantastic events of the stories of the Arabian Nights <sup>2</sup> have with the people of that country a realistic background resting on the firm belief in the possibilities which magic may actually create just as a modern enthusiast readily consents in imagining what incredible wonders science can achieve and physically bring about. Again, witchcraft and godly powers do not long live together. Gradually these develop a strong tendency to separate as intellect is not too slow to assert. This is equally evident in the case of Hindus as well as Muslims. The texts of the Brāhmans *i.e.* the ritualistic counterparts of the Vedic *mantras*

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1 Winternitz—Indian Literature.

2 D. B. Macdonald—The Religious Attitude and Life in Islam.

found it necessary to put severe ban on sorcery. The Buddhist and Jain monks too, in their *śāstras*, had been forbidden to indulge in feats of exorcisms. In the same way, the Qur'an<sup>1</sup> prohibits : "Therefore leave them and their imaginings."

**The Problem of time:** This has always engaged the thought of both the Hindu and Muslim theologists. The Vedas, Brāhmanas, Upaniṣads and Purānas in various ways speak of the divinity of time. The Atharvaveda<sup>2</sup> says—"Time created the earth, by time the sun burns, through time all beings exist." In the Qur'an the Prophet identifies "Dhar" i.e. Time with God.

**Succession of Teachers:** The Vedas often refer to sages who had preceded and made pathways for the progressive march of thoughts.<sup>3</sup> This is a very favourite idea with the Hindu scriptures and as such finds frequent repetition.<sup>4</sup> With the Islam also it is a great point that the divine message has been preached through ages and through a succession of apostles.<sup>5</sup> One passage may be quoted : "And most certainly we gave Moses the Book and we sent

1 Qrn., vi, 112.

2 A. V., xix, 53

3 A. V., xviii, 2, 2, 2,

4 Chnd. Up., III, ii, 4 ; Gita, iv, 1.

5 Qrn., ii, 146 ; xiii, 38 ; xi, 78.

apostles after him, one after another ; and we gave Jesus, the son of Mary, clear argument and strengthened him with holy revelations .....”<sup>1</sup>

**Short-lived World :** Like the Islamic, the Aryan scriptures often speak of God’s visible blessings<sup>2</sup>—riches, glories and worthy children. But both the creeds refuse any undue credit to this material world. A life is utterly misspent if it is solely lived in satisfying the relentless demands of the earthly existence. The Upaniṣads call the world transitory.<sup>3</sup> They consider<sup>4</sup> its gifts as ephemeral things and know that its powers wear away. In the same way, the Qur’an<sup>5</sup> warns that the life of this world should not be taken too seriously for greater possibilities of joy wait across its borders. Thus the desire of the infinite joy in God inspires the spiritual utterance of all religions. The Śruti<sup>6</sup> abounds in the idea of resting in God. Buddhism<sup>7</sup> also speaks of living in God. Mollah Shah, a great Sufi saint who lived in India during the days of Dara and Awrangzeb, taught the doctrine of union with God. Again, even paradise is not recognized as a special offer of happiness since that is not enduring.

1 Qrn.—edited by Maulana Muhammad Ali—Part i, chp. ii, sec. 2, verse 87.

2 R. V., i, 1, 3.

3 Maitrayani—i, 4.

4 vide, Kt. Up.

5 Qrn., vi, 32.

6 Prasna Up., vi, 5 ; Gita, ii, 72 ; V, 5.

7 Brahnavihara.



Similarly, the Sufis also do not think of paradise as altogether enviable because its delights divert the mind from the everlasting relation with truth. Besides, both Pātanjal and Sufi <sup>1</sup> maintain that soul is eternal and not subject to change while body cannot oppose the soul.

**Good Works :** Both Hinduism and Islam have little praise for mere indulgence in vague sentiments. They insist on doing good deeds. The spirit of active services according to the notion of piety has been strongly recommended. To make matters mystically imperative, moral demands have been taken for God's wishes. In this way, the steady faith in God has been mingled with the obedience to the ethical laws of the world. So good work has come to mean God's work. All scriptures, therefore, enjoin with equal emphasis that virtuous works must be done to win the love of God. The desire to know Him can only become effective when it is pushed along with the desire to serve. The complicated inter-relation of thought and work in this respect is well explained when the Lord <sup>2</sup> advises his disciple : "Whose sins have vanished and doubts passed away, whose thoughts are well concentrated, those sages being engaged in good works for humanity gains admission into Me." The same spiritual <sup>3</sup> injunction

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1 A-B. I.

2 Gita, v, 25.

3 Qrn., xix, 96.

is heard when the Prophet tells his followers :  
 'Verily those who believe and do good, the Merciful  
 will bestow on them love.'

**Hereafter and the Reward :** A virtuous deed has in itself an aesthetic value. One feels it is so much pleasing. A clean conscience fills the mind with a sense of achieving real beauty in the execution of a work. But there is another aspect. A pious deed generally requires one to leave aside much of immediate material interests. The code of morals imposes some conditions of sacrifice and hardship. There the commercial instinct comes in to suggest that one should be more than compensated who chooses a disciplined line of conduct. This idea of ethical values encourages the hope of a reward. It may be partly fulfilled in this life. But elaborate enjoyments are reserved for the life after death. The Vedic gods are invoked to grant<sup>1</sup> all comforts of this world and the next. Likewise the Qur'an<sup>2</sup> assures that God will give the reward of this world and the hereafter. Now, as there is but little room for play of fancy in conceiving the nature of the pleasures of this life, it becomes quite natural that scriptures enormously speculate on the rewards in the next world. The Vedas<sup>3</sup> draw very alluring pictures of felicity while referring to the entry into the highest heaven as a reward for good

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1 Y. V., iii, 43, 1.

2 Qrn., iv, 133.

3 R. V., x, 14, 8.

works. The great charm of woman's society in paradise, so favourite a prize with the Islamic believers, had its appeal to the Aryan sages <sup>1</sup> as well. There is, however, a recognition of time-limit in the fortunes of the other world. The Islamic theology <sup>2</sup> speaks of excellent enjoyments until a prescribed time. Similarly the Hindu *sāstras* <sup>3</sup> inform that divine feasts do not last for ever and on the withering away of holiness—here it differs—one has got to return to this mortal world. Again, although one is to earn his title to the joys of heaven by virtue of meritorious works, both the religions recognize the fact of God's grace which grants bliss irrespective of any such extraneous religious activities. The Qur'an <sup>4</sup> mentions: Then afterward Allah will relent toward whom He pleaseth, for He is gracious and merciful. Just so, this is a dominant thought in the Hindu <sup>5</sup> theology.

**Sacrificial Slaughter of Cow :** The Muslim festival of Baqrid is too well known. Several Vedic rituals also recommended sacrifice of cow. <sup>6</sup> She was used to be killed in marriage ceremonies. <sup>7</sup> For entertaining guests beef was served. <sup>8</sup> There is a ruling <sup>9</sup> on the importance of bovine meat in *Śrādh*

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1 A. V., iv, 7, 34, 2.

2 Qrn., xi, 3.

3 Gita, ix, 20-21.

4 Qrn., ix, 27.

5 Gita, xviii, 62.

6 R. V. vi, 28, 4 ; x, 169, 3.

7 R. V. x, 85, 13.

8 R. V. i, 31, 15 ; Uttara Ram Charitam of Bhavabhuti.

9 Gobhila Grihya Sutra.

ceremonies. At the same time, she was an object of warm reverence and regarded as a goddess.<sup>1</sup> Her voice was to the Ṛṣis like the very melody of their own chantings of Vedic hymns<sup>2</sup> and music of the airy damsels.<sup>3</sup> As a result of this complex, gradually arose a school of thought that came to protest against cow-killing. Already the Vedas began to call cows *aghīnyā*,<sup>4</sup> unslaughterable, lest there should be too many deaths. In the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa is found a more distinct objection, and still more in the Mahābhārata. And slowly the custom passed away. It may be observed that generally speaking beef is gradually growing less favourite with Musalmans. The well-considered words of a great Muslim educationist is worth remembering in this connexion: "There is no person who desires more than I that friendship and union should exist between the two peoples of India and that one should help the other. I have often said that India is like a bride whose two eyes are the Hindus and Muslims. Her beauty consists in this that her two eyes be of equal lustre. I have often given my nation to understand that slaughtering cows for the purpose of annoying Hindus is the height of cantankerous folly ; if friendship may exist between us

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1 R. V. viii, 101, 15—16.

3 R. V. x, 95, 6.

2 R. V. vii, 32, 22.

4 A., V., iii, 6, 30, 1.

and them, that friendship is far to be preferred to the sacrifice of cows." <sup>1</sup>

**Attention to Guests :** Hinduism enjoins that a guest should be treated with extreme veneration due to a divinity. He is accepted as a god—*atithi devobhava*. <sup>2</sup> Islamic conduct of receiving guests also suggests the same expression of a very well-bred mind : "And when ye enter any houses, salute one another as from God with a welcome and blessed greeting." <sup>3</sup> It may be noted that the early Arabs had a most kindly regard for guests.

**Kingly duties :** In social idealism also resemblances abound. The saying of poet Kālidāsa <sup>4</sup> that the king accepted taxes only to give back to the people, compares very happily with what poet Sadi says in urging the king to be affectionate towards subjects because <sup>5</sup> the rayat is the root that gives the sap of life to the growing tree. Again, this humanitarian idealism is further evident when we read side by side the precepts laid down by law-givers as royal obligations during famine. The Hindu law <sup>6</sup> prescribes : In times of famine the king shall favour his

1 Sir Syed Ahmad on the Present State of Indian Politics—  
Reprint from the Pioneer, Allahabad.

2 For glorification of guests, vide A. V., ix, 6. 3 Qrn., xxiv, 61.

4 Prajanameva bhutvartham sa tabhyo valimagrahit.

5 Rayat chnn be khand wa Sultan darakht.

6 Kautilya Arthasastra.

people by providing them with seeds and provision, by distributing the excess wealth of the rich among the people or by adopting the policy of thinning the rich by exacting extra revenue. Similarly the Muslim Law <sup>1</sup> informs : "State granaries are applied to the relief of indigent husbandmen : and in time of scarcity, grain is sold at a low price, but the quantity is proportioned to the absolute necessities of the purchaser. Likewise throughout the empire, a great quantity of food is dressed daily for the support of the poor needy."

**Reverence for Women :** Last though not the least, a special instance of cultural affinity of remarkable significance calls for mention. The Qur'anic <sup>2</sup> commandment of respect for women has a pleasing parallel in the Hindu śāstras, <sup>3</sup> and extreme sanctity of marriage has been equally <sup>4</sup> inculcated. Pious women have been praised as being devoted to husband, reliable in matters of confidence and favoured of God. <sup>5</sup> They have been thought of as household goddesses, <sup>6</sup> and gods feel like living in a house where wives are looked upon with great regard. <sup>7</sup> A loving veneration for mother has been

<sup>1</sup> A. A.

<sup>2</sup> Qrn., Sura iv.

<sup>3</sup> Georges Clemenceau—In the Evening of My Thoughts, vol. i—scribes a high degree of civilization to the Vedic Hindus on the evidence of their regard for women.

<sup>4</sup> R. V., x, 85. cf. Qrn., iv, 23.

<sup>5</sup> Qrn., iv, 38

<sup>6</sup> Striash Sriascha—Manu.

<sup>7</sup> Manu, iii, 56

referred to with the same tenderness. Muhammad's idea of paradise lying at the feet of mother very much resembles the Mahābhāratan <sup>1</sup> conception of getting free of all distress and discomfiture while one comes home calling out to mother. The Hindus have a galaxy of noble ladies. The names of celebrated sages like Maitreyi and Gārgi, devoted wives like Sāvitrī and Damayanti, keen scholars like Ubhaibhārati and Līlābati and too many more to name are shining luminaries for all ages and all countries. Islam also has quite a proud record. It has been very rightly asserted: "Our Lady of Light is the embodiment of all that is divine in womanhood. And she has been followed by a long succession of women who have consecrated their sex by their virtues. Who has not heard of the saintly Rabia and a thousand others her equals." <sup>2</sup>

The comparative study of numerous cultural ideals and theological beliefs uncover a good deal of intellectual traditions shared between the Hindus and Musalmans. Having, of course, marked differences as well, these agreements are enough to banish one's preoccupation about any essential antagonism relating to culture. Eccentric researches, no doubt, may claim to find close relations in strange things. One

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<sup>1</sup> MBH., x ii, 2 65

<sup>2</sup> Syed Amir Ali—The Spirit of Islam, p. 189.

may thus look for similarities in two persons just on the ground that the rivers happening to flow by the towns they live in have the same odd name, and, what is more, the very same rare fishes go about splashing their waters. But these analogies that we have been discussing are far from being superficial. They go deep down into the basic ideas of religion and general expression of life. It is quite possible to multiply instances. Before concluding we shall, however, only cite one representative example of an affinity in the fundamental conception of life : “*So Aham*, ‘I am He,’ says the Hindu mystic, and tries with that affirmation to abolish the greatest duality in existence, that between man and God. *Islam*, ‘God’s will be done,’ says the devout Muslim as he tries to be one with the divine will in all its manifestations.”<sup>1</sup>

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1 C. Jinrajdas—The Mediator.



## PARALLELISM IN ARIO-~~IS~~SLAMIC HYMNS

The ritualistic part of devotion is usually the commercial wisdom of securing God's indulgence. There is precious little of tuning the mind in accordance with realization. Formula-making is its main characteristic. Intense feeling for God is a somewhat different mood. It comes when desire to love and determination to know possess the mind at the same time. Love of God drives one to know of Him thoroughly but then it is the knowledge about Him that lures one to love unconventionally. Real inspiration is born of a perfect understanding of the two. Then it speaks out. And when it speaks, the thoughts ring with a music. These inspired utterances of the inner principles of being in relation to God, commonly called hymns or prayers, are released when the mind rises to a very high pitch or dives into a deep concentration. It becomes divested of much of the local qualities and largely belongs to the universal. More essential feelings of humanity are then awakened. As such, prayers of various people happily show an intimate association. Yet every religion has a sort of personality which makes

a thing what it is. Naturally, the Aryan and the Islamic hymns, while each maintaining a peculiar genius, carry between them many resembling ideas and even identical expressions. It is a pleasure to drift along the delightful stream, murmuring with sweet ripples, of spiritual experiences embodied in the scriptures of these two imaginative races.

Lest we should be drawn too long a way, let us, however, only inquire into the two most renowned verses of Qur'an. They are the 'Prayer' and the 'Throne' verses. It is interesting to annotate and interpret every separable part of them with ample references from the Hindu scriptures.

### THE PRAYER VERSE

The Qur'an begins :

#### PRAISE TO GOD

The very opening line of the Vedas speak :

"Agni, I praise, the house-hold priest."—R. V. i. 1.

Compare a few other texts of the Hindu śāstra :

O mighty Indra, lord of the mobile and the immobile, beautiful one, we bow to thee, again and again.—S. V. ii, 1.

"Let my inspiring hymn go forth to Viṣṇu."—R. V. i, 124, 3.

O Indra, the *Udgātar* (singer priest) sings thy prayer with Soma songs, the *Hotār* (caller priest) worships thee with *Ric-mantras*, the *Brāhman* (high priest) like pipers tunefully praises thee.—R. V. i, 10,1.

“Sing forth a hymn sublime and solemn,

Grateful to glorious Varuna, Imperial ruler.”—  
R. V. v, 85.

‘Imperial ruler’—mark it, and proceed to the next idea of the Qur’an :

#### LORD OF THE WORLDS

Yes, worlds—this and the next world.

cf. “Before whose majesty and mighty manhood

The two worlds trembled : he, O men, is Indra.”  
—R.V. ii, 12.

#### MERCIFUL

May Indra and Agni grant us happiness by their mercy.—R. V. vii, 35.

“When through want of strength we violate thy laws, punish us not, O God, for that iniquity.”—  
R.V. vii, 39.

“Vāsudeva is the supreme absolute spirit, endowed with auspicious tributes.”—S. S.

‘O Puṣan, thou knowest how to save us.’—R. V. i, 42, 7.

Indra delivers us from sins gone to great lengths.  
—R.V. vii, 20.

#### COMPASSIONATE

cf. “That ocean of compassion, the Lord, tender to his votaries.”—S. S.

To an opposing school of argument, the Nyāya-śāstra says—“We reply, O thou crest-jewel of the atheistic school, be pleased for a moment to close thy envy-dimmed eyes, and to consider that His creation is indeed solely caused by compassion.”—S.S.

“So like a father to his son,  
Be easy of approach to us ;  
Agni, for weal abide with us.”—R.V. i, 1, 9.

#### KING ON THE JUDGMENT DAY

Hinduism, however, does not think of the Day of Judgment. But taking them separately, the ideas of Kingship and Judgment are otherwise amply represented in the Hindu theology. God is, as the Śruti says <sup>1</sup>—the mighty terror like the thunderbolt going to be hurled. This again, may be compared to the Qur’an :<sup>2</sup> “And my chastisement—that is a painful chastisement.” It may

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<sup>1</sup> Kt. Up.

<sup>2</sup> Qrn., xv, 50.

further be noted that the thought of rebirth is not totally absent in the Islamic faith : "Ye were dead, and he gave you life ; then He will cause you to die, and again He will give you life, then shall ye return to Him."<sup>1</sup> Similarly the Gita<sup>2</sup> says that man has to get through many births before he becomes endowed with supreme knowledge and thus qualified to be one with God. The Sufi saint Jalal-uddin Rumi says : I died from the mineral and became a plant ; I died from the plant and reappeared in an animal ; I died from the animal and became a man—wherefore should I then fear ? In the same way, the Śruti,<sup>3</sup> says : Human souls move in the cycle of Brahma. The Aitareya Āranyaka also refers to it. The common story of rebirth among the Hindus is a cycle of 84,00000 births.

cf. Yama \* is the king of the dead.—Y. V.

Yama is the king of death—Br. Ak. Up.

'And Yama here provide thee with fit mansions.'

—R. V. x, 18, 13.—funeral song

He is Indra who brings about the end of creation.—Kaibalya Up.

1 Qrn., ii, 26.

2 Gita, vii, 19.

3 St. Up., i, 6.

4 But this very Yama himself was first dead and then taken over to the other world—A.V., xviii, 3, 3, 3,

Homage to Indra, the sovereign, the most venerable, the leader of men and their Judge.—S. V. ii, 3, 1.

From God men receive reward or punishment for their actions.—Śruti quoted in Br. S. iii, 2, 2.

God is He who metes out punishment or reward for actions.—Nyāyasūtra, iv. 1. 19.

He dwells deep in all hearts and is the supreme Judge of all beings.—St. Up. iii, 13; Br. s. i, 1. 1.  
• —Śribhāṣya.

#### THEE WE WORSHIP

cf. Bow to thee, O God, submission to the All-pervading. Thou art the visible God. Thee shall I call the God visible.—Tait. Up.

O Indra, thee alone we worship leaving all else : so our enemies slander, but we care not.—R. V. i, 4, 5.

The mighty being have I known, bright as sun beyond darkness. His knowledge alone gives immortality. There is no other way than this—St. Up.

Thou art the great Lord of all, thou art the massive refuge of all.—St. Up.

Let the rays of knowledge be worshipped.

Let the great birthless One be worshipped.

Let the joy of God causing deliverance be worshipped.—Y. V. iii, 43, 1.

#### AND THEE WE ASK FOR HELP

cf. O Gods, to ye we pay homage for protection and for suppression of all evils.—Y. V. iii, 43, 1.

Like the birds with lovely wings, the sages flock around Indra and pray—Lord, banish darknes, fill our eyes with light and set us, as if in bondage, free.—R. V. x, 73, 11 ; S. V. iii, 9, 7.

In all affairs of joy and of danger we friendly admirers invoke thy help, O powerful Indra, for deliverance.—S. V. ii, 5, 9.

O Agni, we pray to be given that intellect which gods and sages of old revere.—Y.V. 32, 1, 4, 1.

“Thou Agni ! art the giver of strength, give me strength ; Thou Agni, make complete which is incomplete in my body.”—Y. V. iii, 17.

Lord, thou art the source of all courage, and give me courage ; of all energy, give me energy ; of all strength, give me strength ; of all moral force, give me that force ; of righteous indignation, give me that indignation.—Y. V. xix, 9.

O great God, may I be given to realize the knowledge of immortality, may my body prove use-

ful, my tongue be endowed with sweet speeches and ears ready to receive many truths.—Tait. Up. iv, 1.

“Force art thou, force mayest thou give me, hail !  
Power art thou, power mayest thou give me,  
hail !

Strength art thou, strength mayest thou give me,  
hail !

Life-time art thou, life-time mayest thou gave  
me, hail !

Hearing art thou, hearing mayest thou give me,  
hail !

Sight art thou, sight mayest thou give me, hail !  
Protection art thou, protection mayest thou give  
me, hail !”—A. V. ii, 17.

#### GUIDE US TO THE STRAIGHT PATH

cf. O Agni, take us by the good path leading to welfare and blessing.—R. V. i, 189, 1.

Absolve us, save us, favour us with sweet words, O King of kings keep us on the path conducted by father Manu.—R. V. viii, 30, 3.

Agni, show us the straight road. We bow to thee with reverence for thou wilt help us to be aware of the zig-zag way.—Y. V. xl, 16.

Varuna and Mitra, lead us right through.....  
Venerable Indra and Maruts, show us the best way



to benefit....( In our way ) the winds may blow sweetly....night and morning be sweet to us.—R. V. i. 90.

#### THE PATH OF THOSE TO WHOM THOU ART GRACIOUS

cf. "Let thy good will, O Father of Maruts, light on us.....

Where is that gracious hand of thine, O Rudra!...

I bow down like a son before his father,

Who with good will comes nigh to him, O Rudra!"—R. V. ii, 33.

Benevolent God sends down worthiest inspiration for our acquiring divine knowledge—R. V. i. 33, 1.

NOTE: The idea of divine indulgence is very profusely promulgated by the Hindu śāstras. The thought that God's grace alone is the only need<sup>1</sup> is a commonplace among Hindus of all shades of belief, and very familiar to the student of the Hindu philosophy. Śaṅkarāchārya thus comments on Brahmasūtra<sup>2</sup>—the earnest seeker recovers his lost self-realization by the grace of God. Vyāsa thus comments on Pātanjal Yogasūtra.<sup>3</sup>—God confers His grace on him. The Bhāgvat Gītā is resonant with the message of divine grace :

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1 *Brahma Kripahi Keralam.*

2 Br. S., iii, 2, 5.

3 Y. S., i, 23.

O son of Kunti, be sure, my devotee shall never perish.—xviii.

Don't you worry, my worshipper attached to me, I shall free you of all sins.—xviii, 66.

"To them always devoted, who worship me with love, I give the devotion of understanding whereby they come to me."—x, 10.

As a result of my grace one attains eternal bliss.—xviii, 5.

Surrendering your thoughts to me, you will overcome illusion by my grace.—xviii.

#### WITH WHOM THOU ART NOT ANGRY.

cf. So direct me, O Rudra, that I may not deserve thy wrath.—Y. V., xv, 15.

O Rudra, which is thy manifestation of supreme good, supreme bliss and supreme purity, O High One, view us with that auspicious expression.—St. Up., iii, 5.

Man possesses supreme knowledge when he realizes God. Failing this, he is doomed to awful misery, *mahatī vinaṣṭih*—Kn. Up., ii, 5.

#### AND SUCH AS GO NOT ASTRAY.

cf. O Indra, thou knowest which way is good and

which bad. Both in easy and difficult courses, dost thou take place in our front.—R. V., vi, 21, 12.

“O bright and powerful God, through want of strength I erred and went astray : Have mercy, spare me, Mighty Lord.”—R. V., vii, 89, 3.

O God Immortal, Thee I recognize after long meditation. Thou art our guide of the straightest path. Thou hast led the way for our fathers whom it pleased thee to take among the gods and make owners of pleasing things.—R. V., i, 91, 1. •

We have thus far discussed the Islamic Prayer Verse by splitting it up in numerous fractions and annotating each part thereof by the texts of Hindu scriptures. It may be suggested that in Arabic, the original language of the Qur'an, *salat* is the word for prayer while the expression *nemaz* savours of a very close similarity with Sanskrit *namas*, to bow in worship. The parallels quoted are by no means exhaustive but only just enough to convince one that they are more than accidental resemblances merely in the turn of phraseology or forced constructions on some remote sayings. The religions of all people resound with prayers which are no exclusive possessions of any particular race. They belong, more or less, to all humanity. Every nation discovers for itself great general truths in

its own original way. The conceptions are very often universal, only the language and style remain local. Universal truths come home to all people with the feeling and freshness of first-hand realizations wherever they be and in whatever period of history they come into being. The spirit, for instance, of such a prayer <sup>1</sup> cited below is undying and born ever new in all ages, proclaiming thereby the psychological unity of mankind :

“O Varuna, you are sovereign over the whole universe.

Mighty, gods and mortals salute you as their king.

Wealth-giver, our wisdom is green, minds frail ;

Vouchsafe us gracious guidance ;

Let us fill our souls with your illumination and be fearless.”

Leaving the high metaphysical import of the verse quoted above, attention may be paid for a moment to the theological sentiment of ascribing supreme Kingship to God. The Vedas are full of this feeling of loyalty. Indra <sup>2</sup> is styled *Samrāt*—an Emperor. The time-honoured theological concep-

1 R. V., ii, 27, 10—11 ; also cf. Milton—“The imperial throne of Godhead, fixed for ever.”

2 R. V., vii, 82, 2 ; iii. 46, 1—2.

tion of the imperial throne of God lingers still, and even today finds a charming lyrical expression of unadorned beauty in Rabindranath's *Gitānjali*: "You came down from your Throne and stood at my cottage door."<sup>1</sup> The Qur'an also constantly reminds its devotees of the absolute Kingship of God. The same idea is elaborately worked out in the Throne Verse.<sup>2</sup> This celebrated verse is a magnificent hymn combining religious solemnity with poetic splendour. Let us analyse this beautiful hymn and proceed to examine the relations of mysterious community of great thoughts.

### **THE THRONE VERSE** opens :

GOD ! THERE IS NO GOD BUT HE.

But before we set out for the pleasant quest of gathering Hindu sayings on one God, our collections should better be prefaced with a short note to clear the misconception, obtaining among the less inquisitive, that the Hindu theology is a chaotic conglomeration of many gods. The most characteristic trait of Hindu philosophy is to recognize unity in diversity, to find the One among Many. The R̥ṣis have most emphatically declared their abiding faith in one God. They insist that the

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1 49th. song.

2 Qrn., ii, 26.

infinite and eternal surely has to be known as One.<sup>1</sup> The Vedas pay homage to many gods but in order to eradicate any possible superficial understanding, the Rgveda<sup>2</sup> warns :

“They call Him Indra, Mitra, Varuna,  
And Agni ; He is the heavenly bird Garutmat :  
To what is One, the poets give many a name,  
They call it Agni, Yama, Matarisvan.”

So the Vedas said, and so the ancients understood. Yāskamuni clearly explains—“Owing to the greatness of the deity, the one Soul is celebrated as if it were many. The different gods are separate members of the one Soul. And some say that Rishis address their praises according to the multiplicity of natures in the (celestial) existences. And from the universality of their nature the gods are mutually produced from each other and possess the natures of one another.”<sup>3</sup> The Rgveda<sup>4</sup> speaks of gods that their united divinity is one. This conception is the outcome of much reasoning and it has been used with singular effect as the burden of a

1 Br. Ak. Up., iv., 4, 20. ‘Ekadhaivanu drastavyam etat aprameyam dhruvam’.

2 i. 164, 46.

3 Yaska Nirukta, vii, 4, translated in Muir's Original Sanskrit Texts, Vol. V. p. 350 where are noted further references to the Nirukta, xi, 25, and R. V., x, 7, 4.

4 R. V., ii, 27, 4—*Mahat devanam asuratvam ekam.*

lengthy song <sup>1</sup> comprising of no less than twentytwo verses. Again, the slogan of the Śaṅkara-Vedāntic philosophy, which has been acknowledged as a great power in the world of spiritual thoughts, points out to this same direction. This surprisingly popular slogan—*Ekamevādvitīyam* <sup>2</sup>—one only and without any second—was already preconceived in the Vedas <sup>3</sup> which bow down to *T'adekam*—that Absolute One. Max Muller <sup>4</sup> finds that anxious quest after one Supreme Deity is clearly noticeable in the Vedas. <sup>5</sup> And Winternitz <sup>6</sup> is glad to admit: “What inspires us with the highest respect for these ancient thinkers of India is the earnestness and enthusiasm with which they endeavoured to fathom the divine principle, or what Kant would call, the thing-in-itself, whether they called it ‘the One’ or ‘the Existent,’ the Brahman or Atman.”

To return to the magnificent Throne Verse :

GOD ! THERE IS NO GOD BUT HE.

cf. There is one Rudra only, he admits not of a second—St. Up., iii, 2.

Not surely has He any second.—Br. Ak. Up., iv, 3, 23.

1 R. V., iii, 55.    2 Chnd. Up., vi, 2, 1.    3 R. V., i, 164, 6.

4 Muller—Six Systems of Indian Philosophy, p. 59.

5 R. V., x, 121.

6 Winternitz—A History of Indian Literature, Vol. I.

"By the mind alone it is to be perceived, there is in it no diversity. He who perceives therein any diversity, goes from death to death."—Br. Ak. Up., iv, 4.

There remains no illusion, no sorrow for him who sees the Absolute One.—Y. V., xl, 7.

Whose commands all gods obey.—R. V., ii, 121, 10.

From terror of this One the wind-god sets blowing, from its terror the sun-god rises to duty, from its terror the fire-god, the rain-god, and the death-god being the fifth run to their respective work.—Tait. Up., viii.

"He is the one God, hidden in all beings, all-pervading, the self within all beings, watching over all works, dwelling in all beings, the witness, the perceiver, the only one, free from qualities."—St. Up., vi, 11.

#### THE LIVING.

Dr. Martin Haug understands the vedic word *asura* to mean 'Living God.' Oldenberg similarly explains it to mean 'possessed of wonderful power' or 'god.' Indra has been primarily called life and is the source of all life. <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Manu—xii, 123.



cf. Hear ye people and mark this well : he will speak of the mighty *Brahman* who gives breathing to all creation.—A. V., i, 31, 1.

Who is the visible and directly perceptible God.—Br. Ak. Up., iii, 4, 1.

By Whom ordained does life, the first breath, gain energy ?—Kn. Up., i.

#### THE SELF-SUBSISTENT.

cf. God has no need for air or food to live on.—R. V., x, 129, 2.

He is *śvayambhū*—self-existent.—Iśa Up.

He is *paramasvarāt*—the great self-revealing One—Kaivalya Up. The Sufi view of *tajalla*—self-revelation of Allah—may be noted.

I am self-acting and self-determined, and I remain inside as well as outside this my self-generated universe.—R. V., x, 12, 18.

#### SLUMBER SEIZES HIM NOT, NOR SLEEP.

cf. The One God is He who has no birth, no sleep, no dream.—Mdka. Up. Karika-i, 16; iii, 36.

He is the only permanent of all that appears permanent, the only vigilant of all conscious things.—Br. Ak. Up.

Slumberless activity of God.—Gita, iii, 23.

HIS IS WHAT IS IN THE HEAVEN AND  
THE EARTH.

cf. "The earth is His, to Him belong those vast and boundless skies.—A. V., iv, 16.

"He who engendered these, the earth and heaven.  
Who made the worlds the mantle He weareth."  
—A. V., xiii, 3.

"Who made the wide spread earth when quaking  
steadfast,

Who set at rest the agitated mountains,  
Who measured out air's middle space more  
widely,

Who gave the sky support: He, O men, is  
Indra."—R. V., ii, 12 :

There is one God far above all. The Lord  
Immortal holds this massive universe of matter—  
the earth, the skies.—R. V., x, 31, 8.

He is the Lord of all that is created. He  
holds His entire creation from the earth to the  
heavens. That great Lord alone I worship.—Y. V.,  
xiii, 4.

Note: There are other shades of meaning.  
God is the very substance of the universe and yet  
not exhausted in His creation.

cf. All that exists is God.—Chnd. Up., iii, 14, 1.

So immense is the greatness of the mighty Lord that He far surpasses His own creation.—R. V., x, 90, 3.

WHO IS THERE THAT CAN INTERCEDE WITH HIM  
BUT BY HIS PERMISSION ?

Note: Here is another echo of the *Nemaz* verse—‘to whom thou art gracious.’ The idea is further emphasised and occurs once again in this verse itself—‘what pleases Him.’ And like the Qur’an, the Hindu śāstras often reiterate on the essential need of God’s favour. Without this provision, any amount of merit of good deeds or of other virtuous acquisitions would be utterly useless in pleading for entry into heaven’s pleasure or still superior joys.

cf. “Whom I love, I make him mighty.”—R. V., x, 125. <sup>1</sup>

Nor by the knowledge of scriptures, nor by the power of intellect, nor by any wide range of studies, this over-soul becomes realized. Whom God grants, he alone possesses Him, he alone finds Him revealed.—Kt. Up.

“On those to whom gods grace will show  
They understanding should bestow.

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1 Fraser’s Literary History of India, p. 60.

But rob of sense and insight all  
Of whom their wrath decrees the fall."

—Mbh., V., 1222 ;—Muir's translation.

HE KNOWS WHAT IS BEFORE THEM AND WHAT IS  
BEHIND THEM

cf. "The mighty Lord on high our deeds, as if  
at hand, espies ;

The Gods know all men do, though men should  
fain their acts disguise."—A., V., iv, 16, 1.

Who knows all and understands everything.  
—Mdk., Up., i, 1, 9.

He is the Lord of all, knows every event of the  
universe, knows every thought of human beings.  
—Mdka., Up. 6.

To God belongs absolute omniscience.—Y. S.  
i, 26.

God is truth, knowledge and infinity.—Tait. Up.

OF HIS KNOWLEDGE THEY COMPREHEND NOT

cf. Whom words cannot express nor mind can  
comprehend, nor eyes can see.—Kt. Up., vi, 12.

Whom mind fails to conceive but by whom the  
mind works—Him, verily, you know as God.—Kn.  
Up., 5.

God is unspeakable, this the *śāstra* says.—Br. S., iii, 23.

O Indra, men cannot fully understand thy glories.—R.V., vii, 21, 6.

Who are born and who are becoming, none can see, O Visnu, the end of thy all-surpassing splendour.—R.V., vii, 59, 2.

#### BUT WHAT PLEASES HIM

Note : The doctrine of divine indulgence comes in once again. The Hindu *śāstras* too are never tired of repeating that God is accessible to His favoured ones only. The Brahmasūtra is eloquent on this point. Commentators, Śaṅkara<sup>1</sup> and Rāmānuja<sup>2</sup> take good care to impress this idea. The Gita rings with the assurance that to whomsoever God wants to be kind they all will have eternal bliss.<sup>3</sup> And this idea is as old as mankind, and naturally the Vedas have it.

cf. O Agni, you are the preserver of mankind, shining and ever kind beyond due.—R.V., ii, 1, 3.

O Indra, as branches of tree offer ripe fruits to the solicitous so you give riches to your votaries.

1 Isvara prasadat—Śaṅkara Bhasya—Br.S., iii, 2, 5.

2 Hardanugrihitah—Ramanuja Bhasya—Br. S., iv, 2, 18., : ii, 3, 2.

3 xviii, 56.

Your graceful words are as true as they are sweet.  
 Very prompt are your kind measures to protect  
 and enrich your favourites like us.—R.V., i, 8, 8-9.

“If we, as gamesters cheat at play, have cheated,  
 done wrong unwillingly or sinned of purpose,

Cast all these sins away like loosened fetters, and  
 Varuna, let us be thine own beloved.”—R.V., v, 85.

HIS THRONE EXTENDS OVER THE HEAVENS  
 AND THE EARTH.

cf. “Both Heaven and Earth, themselves,  
 bow down before him ;

Before His might the very mountains tremble.”

—R. V., ii, 12, 13.

AND IT TRIES HIM NOT.

cf. Manifold is the fame of His great powers.  
 The energy of His wisdom, strength and action is  
 free and easy and proceeds without any effort.—St.  
 Up., vi, 8.

Free of any fatigue and endeavour is He.—Y. S.,  
 i, 24.

Creation is His mere delight—a child's game.  
 —Br. S., ii, 1, 33. This reminds of the Qur'an—  
 “His command when He wills a thing is to say to it  
 be, and it is.”—xxxvi. 82.

## TO GUARD THEM BOTH

cf. "Whatever exists in heaven and earth,  
                whatever beyond the seas,  
Before the eyes of Varuna, the king,  
                unfolded lies."—A.V., iv, 16, 5.

There is an undercurrent of meaning here. The King not merely keeps guard but decrees according to what He sees.

cf. A complete view of all things does He take  
and permanent measures accordingly He ordains.  
—Isa Up., 8.

He is the One, Unknowable, Almighty God who preserves all these worlds.—St. Up., iii, 1.

**AND HE IS THE HIGH, THE GRAND.**

cf. The Lord of creation is mighty designer and grand. He is pre-eminent. He surveys all creation, keeping much higher above the constellation of the Great Bear.—R.V., x, 82, 2.

“He who gives breath, who gives strength, who commands all, (even) the Gods, reverence, whose shadow is immortality, whose shadow is death—to what God shall we offer our oblation.”—R.V., x, 121, 2.

The comparative study of these two most popular as also glorious verses of the Qur'an in relation to

Hindu thoughts only clearly and pointedly reveal what is already vaguely and generally known. Such findings should prove fully and definitely convincing that all great religions in regard to their higher ideas harmonise in an astonishing manner. In superior spheres of realization we feel rather quite at home. There are no occasions to frown at each other with any look of strangers, far less of enemies. This does not mean that there are no differences. These there are. But oppositions in fundamental issues are few. And they are just delicately shaded expressions of the peculiar genius of each nation. As such, they are too fine and sublimated to give rise to any exchange of rough feelings. The danger comes from differences that are only outgrowths of local circumstances, matters of ritualistic details and effects of jealous spirit prevailing among irresponsible adherents. Unfortunately, these secondary differences, in the nature of things, have ample business to get mixed up with the events of our everyday life. So, running through the whole course of routine existence, they vitiate our thoughts with accentuated and exaggerated feelings of division. Then there is produced an irritation that seems very much like that of uneasy conscience. It follows that they create a stagnant mood of hatred and some times provoke cruel energy to pull down apparently



opposing orders. Eventually, this attitude of rivalry, however much unreasonable, becomes an article of practical faith.

Yet the only cure of this obsession is to become occupied with thoughts on the similarities and identities in the upper region of all religions. That is refreshing and inspiring. And nothing but the universality of mind and the clarity of outlook thus obtained can help us to take a leap out of gloomy antagonism. Happily, such resemblances, revealing harmony between Hindu and Muslim cults and cultures, are found in plenty. And what is more, they exist not simply in broad issues and suggestive interpretations. Indeed, they offer a whole lot closely associated in meaning and even mode of putting, provided one proceeds with an open mind and discerning intellect. We shall presently feel it as we go on in the interesting pursuit of parallel passages noted below :

- (a) "He is the Creator, He the Disposer.  
He himself is one, single, one only."

—A. V., ii, 732-733.

cf. "Shall I seek any other Lord than God,  
when He is Lord of all things!"—Qr'n.,  
vi, 164.

- (b) "How many Gods are there ? One ! I know

that Person, the Last Source of every soul.”  
—Br. Ak. Up., III, 9, 1, 10.

cf. ‘He is the First and the Last, the Seen and the Hidden.’—Qrn., lvii, 3.

(c) Ye desire to know him who is our father and begetter. He controls destiny. Nothing in earth, air or heaven is beyond his ken. Though going by names of many gods He indeed is one and without a partner.—R. V., x, 82, 3.

cf. Qrn. iii, 4—Surely, nothing on earth or in heaven is hidden from God. He formed you in the wombs, just as it pleased him. There is no God but He, the mighty, the wise.

(d) When we see, hear, perceive and know the self then all this is known.—Br. Ak. Up., ii, 4.

cf. Qrn., x, 2 & 37—By virtue of sincerity they win God’s favour.....Merely following an opinion does not yield the truth.

(e) Words of the Vedas do not offer him the milk of religion who recites the hymns without understanding them well.—Sāyana Introduction to the R̥gveda.

cf. Qrn. iv, 46—Ye believers, ye understand what ye say.

(f) If you are slain, you gain heaven ; if you win, you enjoy the rule over the earth ; therefore, for the sake of religion you fight ; then you do not commit any sin.—Gitā, ii, 37 and 38.

cf. Qrn., iv, 76—Let them, who part with the life of this world in exchange for the Hereafter, fight in the way of God ; for fighting in the way of God, whether slain or victorious, we will give them a great reward.

(g) Whom eyes cannot see but who gives sight to the eyes. Him you worship—not any other deity.—Kn. Up., i, 6.

cf. Qrn., vi, 103—The sight comprehends Him not, but He comprehends the sight ; and He is the incomprehensible, the knowing.

(h) Truth is the support of the universe. From God emanated Law and Truth.—R. V., x, 83, 1 ; x, 190.

cf. Qrn. xliv, 1 and 2—...not created in sport ... created them in truth.

(i) Nothing before or after, nothing inside or outside, nothing beside Him exists.—Br. Ak. Up., ii, 5, 19.

He is the inner side of all things yet he remains external.—Íśa Up., 5.

cf. Qrn., lvii, 3,—Nothing was before Him nor

will any be after Him. Nothing else is inside nor outside Him.

(j) Who having surrendered to Me the results of all his works become attached to me and worship with steadfast devotion, I take those devoted ones across the sea of world abounding in death.—Gitā, xii, 6-7.

Who does my work, who is given over to me, who is devoted to me, void of attachment, without hatred to any born being, he comes to me.—Gitā, xi, 55.

cf. Qrn., vi, 163,—Say thou: my prayers and my worship, and my life and my death, are all for God alone.

(k) “Whose greatness these snowy mountains and the sea with the river declare—of whom these regions, of whom they are the arms,—to what God shall we offer our oblation.”—R. V., x, 121, 4.—Muir’s Trns.

“He to whom heaven and earth, standing firm by his will, look up, trembling in their mind; He over whom the risen sun shines forth;—Who is the the God to whom we shall offer our sacrifice.”—R. V. x, 121, 6.—Max Muller’s trns. <sup>1</sup>

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1 Muir, following Bhotlink and Roth’s Lexicon, translates *kran-dasi* as ‘two contending armies.’ We have given here Max Muller’s translation which, following Mahidar’s Sanskrit Lexicon and Sayana’s Commentary, interprets the original as ‘heaven and earth.’

cf. Qrn., xvi, 46—"The seven heavens praise Him, and the earth, and all who are therein ; neither is there a thing but does celebrate His praise, but ye understand not their celebration."

- (l) "The charitable giver's wealth melts  
not away ;  
The niggard never finds a man to pity him...  
The wealthier man should give unto the  
needy,  
Considering the course of life hereafter."  
—R. V., x, 137.

cf. Qrn., iii, 175—They should know that it is not good for them to be niggardly in what God has vouchsafed them of His bounty ; rather it is worse.

Qrn., ii, 274,—And what good ye give in alms shall be repaid you.

(m) Let him constantly do what is good to his parents.—Manu, ii, 227-28.

cf. Qrn., xxix, 7.—We have enjoined on man to show kindness to parents.

(n) "Hear thou My supreme word : That I, desiring thy welfare, will declare to thee who art beloved."—Gitā, x, 1.

cf. Qrn., xx, 39.—"Saith the Lord : I myself have made thee an object of love."

(o) "One and the same be your resolve, and be your minds of one accord.

United be the thoughts of all that all may happily agree."—R. V., x, 191.

cf. Qrn., iii, 98,—He put love into your hearts, and by His favours ye become brothers.

(p) By fervent prayer seek God.—Tait. Up.

Pursue the course of meditation again and again until you find God.—Br. S., iv, 1, 1-2.

cf. Qrn., ii, 143,—Ye believers, seek help with patience and prayer ; surely God is with the patient.

(q) In whom things are born, live and end.—Br. S., i, 1, 2.

All is God, in Him growing, passing away and breathing.—Chnd. Up., iii, 14, 1.

cf. Qrn., ii, 151,—We are of God, and to Him we shall return.

(r) Whatever is invested with radiance, with beauty, with spirit, all these, you know, are expressions of my glory.—Gītā, x, 11.

The all-knowing God's glory.....this well organised universe.....the heaven and earth, the course of time.....The Eternal One manifests Himself through all joy-forms.—Mdk. Up.

cf. Qrn., ii, 159.—“Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth, the alteration of night and day, in the ships that pass through the sea laden with what is useful to man, and in the rain which God sends down from heaven giving life by it to the earth after its death, and spreading over it all sorts of cattle, and in the change of the winds, and in the clouds that are pressed to service betwixt heaven and earth—are signs to people who understand.”

(s) “Winds blow forth ; to earth the quivering lightnings fall. The plants shoot up ; with moisture streams the realm of light. For all the world abundant nourishment is born, when by Pārjanya earth is fertilised with seed.”—R. V., v. 83. 4.

cf. Qrn., ii, 20.—Who made for you the earth as a bed and the fruits as a substance for you.

(t) Everywhere His hands and feet, all around His eyes and ears, on all sides His heads and face—He envelops all.—St. Up., iii, 16.

Heaven is head, sun and moon are His eyes, directions are His ears, the Veda is His voice, wind is His life, universe is His heart.—Mdk., ii, 1. 4.

East south, west, north, up and down—all directions are His spirit.—Br. Ak. Up, iv, 2, 4.

“He is downwards, He is upwards, He is in the rear, He is in the front, He is in the north; He is all this.”—Chnd. vii, 25, 1.

cf. Qrn., ii, 109.—Whichever way you turn, there is the face of God. Surely God is omnipresent.

(u) If he desires that his votaries shall live, they do not die.—R.V. x, 25, 7.

cf. Qrn., iii, 154—If God will help you, none shall overcome you : who is that will help you against Him?

(v) Don't you covet others' wealth ; enjoy that much only what God has given you.—Īśa Up.

cf. Qrn., iv, 36.—Covet not the gifts by which God has raised some of you above the other.

(w) Blind darkness they enter who prefer Nescience ; a greater darkness still do they enter who delight in divine knowledge merely.—Īśa Up., 9.

As desire is injurious, so is effacement.—Mdk. Up.

cf. The Qur'an—God loves not those who go beyond due bounds in any thing.

(x) Brahma covers all things ; His light enlightens whatever exists.—Kt. Up. ; Mdk. Up., iii, 11, 10.



cf. The Qur'an—Allah surrounds and encloses all things. His light illumines all heaven and earth.

Such an intimate affinity of religious sentiments and cultural inclinations warrants a reckoning of higher values for truths held in common. More. It goes to awaken a genuine mutual admiration. The recognition of one's own thoughts belonging to the league of universal conceptions imparts to one a greater self-respect, while self-love loses its morbidity and expands into a love of humanity.

Instead of being a spectacle of wealth and grandeur in creation, the division of mankind is proving to be a menace. It is no longer allowed to function as compromising and supplementing parts of an organic whole. The hilarious abandon to the love of power and possession has created a tumult of envious units. It has almost thwarted the divine scheme of a synthetic development of nations. The spirit of sympathetic contributions to the glory of mankind is going to be very nearly crushed. And should it go on ? Through this massive indifference to the aesthetic as also the moral demand for the bright and healthy blossoming of humanity, a wail of agony and despair is breaking forth all around. Even the very physical existence is getting shaky.

Let us believe in humanity and open our minds

to the light of cultural brotherhood. The Qur'an assures : "God is the patron of those who believe ; He brings them out of darkness into light."<sup>1</sup> The age-old cry of mankind is for this light that reveals God in relation to the whole range of humanity. The Śruti prays : "Lead me from the unreal to the real, lead me from darkness to light, lead me from death to immortality."<sup>2</sup> To-day the prayer of mankind everywhere is—O God ! emancipate us from the grip of narrow interests that are mocking us with the appearance of reality, chase away the darkness of suspicion that seeks to succeed through petty-fogging cleverness, strengthen us against the mortal dread of the price we have to pay to earn an entry into a lasting relation of good will among races. No one can any longer live the life of exclusiveness. We have to take a wider view of humanity and arrive at a better understanding of its problems. Not only it is beautiful to do it, not only it is ennobling to do it, but it is utterly unavoidable if we have to physically exist with the confidence of existing long and well. The primary requisite to attain this end is undoubtedly a cultural co-operation and comradeship, harmonising the interests and outlook of numerous races and creeds making up the Indian

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1 Qrn', ii, 258.

2 Br. Ak. Up., i, 3, 28.

nation and its composite civilization. And the mystery of creation clearly points out to this harmony :

“From Harmony, from heavenly Harmony  
This universal frame began :  
When Nature underneath a heap  
Of jarring atoms lay  
And could not heave her head,  
The tuneful voice was heard from high  
Arise, ye more than dead !” <sup>1</sup>

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1 Dryden—Song for Saint Cecilia's Day.

# PSYCHO-ANALYSIS OF JIHAD

## THE GRIP OF PRIMEVAL HABITS

The progress of evolution carries in its train a number of gifts. They are revealed gradually. At a later stage man is endowed with a "faculty of faith",<sup>1</sup> a perception of spiritual forces, an impulse to worship. Then religion comes in. It proceeds from a unique, native, universal 'feeling-response' to purity and perfection, suggesting the Supreme Principle moving behind and in the creation. Profound is the reaction of this consciousness of the awful yet adorable mystery. He feels he is but an utterly little creature<sup>2</sup> and yet he does not feel altogether helpless. He becomes filled with a sense of assurance and takes to "religion for its practical efficiency."<sup>3</sup> This complex realization changes the ordinary values of things and keeps man looking for beauty and good in thought and action. But, compared to almost a million years of wild existence, this is merely the growth of yesterday. Naturally, his rugged traditions, though not having

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1 Max Muller—Science of Religion, p. 13.

2 Rudolph Otto—The idea of the Holy, pp. 6, 52.

3 Sir S. Radhakrishnan—An Idealist View of Life, p. 34.

absolute hold, rest with a dead weight on his recently illuminated soul. Culture, which represents his brighter and newer acquirement, often speaks with a delicately faltering voice and has no better than a very halting march. It is no surprise that primary habits rule long over his spiritual faculties, for "accurate thought is fatiguing and moral enthusiasm is easily chilled by the pressure of circumstances."<sup>1</sup> Then scriptural texts are left to take care of themselves. Superior ideals are twisted and turned down. Ethical laws become subordinated to curious theological formulas which are "secondary products".<sup>2</sup> The creative energy and lively emotion of a religion is so short-lived.

#### THE INHERENT WEAKNESS OF RELIGION

But this is inevitable. Such is the puzzling complexity of things. In religion itself there is the seed of opposition to progress. As governed by theological dogmas, religion constitutes a reactionary force, baffling the efforts of spiritualism, suppressing the instincts for refinement and arresting the growth of life. The publicity given to it by priestly speculations helps to evolve an organization that acquires a kind of political efficiency. It fast begins to func-

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1 F. W. Barnes—Scientific Theory and Religion—Aberdeen Lectures, p. 632.

2 William James—The Varieties of Religious Experience.

tion as a political power. There is chastisement ready for any innovation in philosophical ideas and social ideals. It does not care to move with time, takes no account of altered situations and constantly tries to impose its old-world habits on modern conditions of life. It assumes the rôle of a final authority in all matters and seeks to dominate every other law of life by its own peculiar laws. It feeds life for a time. So long life grows rich and robust. But at length it begins to look at things from a wrong end. Then movements of life are viewed with suspicion and activities of intellect are watched with jealousy. The relation becomes altogether embarrassing, and religion sways between fear and patronage in its attitude towards life. Naturally, it works as a restraining influence, makes alliance with all that goes for conservatism and "preserves much of what was bad in the past." <sup>1</sup> No wonder then that "religion is set down as the cause of our intellectual and national bondage, of our failure and lack of vitality."<sup>2</sup> In fact, it has little function to-day, and whatever it has is too badly managed; for in practice religion has become antagonistic to higher morality and culture. Besides, otherworldliness must have to yield to the urgent need of an intellectual solution of social rejuvenation and economic readjustment.

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1 Bertrand Russel—Education and the Social order, P. 111.

2 Radhakrishnan—An Idealist View of Life, P. 49.

## ABUSE OF RELIGION

And it is the tragic irony of religion that in its name irreligious actions are destined to obtain sanction. Whatever ideals religion may introduce and civilization may recommend to secure peace and excellence, the non-material culture of man is too readily subverted by the reassertion of his primeval instincts which control the greater part of his being. His line of action is broadened to allow a fierce pursuit of power and possession. The new religion just serves to build up a huge reserve of mental vigour and give a tremendous impetus to growth and expansion. Banking upon these stupendous resources, man rushes to develop in political directions and geographical acquirements. The conviction of growing power animates the mind with a ruthless love of action, and there is little help if that action is farthest removed from love and grace.

## THE EXAMPLE OF THE ARYANS

It so happens, therefore, that the Aryan treatment of the Non-Aryans<sup>1</sup> was such as can by no stretch of tricky explanation be called sweet and generous. Their fortresses were demolished, their horses and

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1 There is a theory that the two were not different races but were simply following different cults. Aryans worshipped Indra and Agni while Non-Aryans worshipped demons.

cattle were robbed, their civilization was insulted. The ritualistic canons and social laws of the Hindus forged massive weapons to maintain Brāhmanic imperialism. With the aid of intellectual superiority, an intricate theology was brought into being by the Indo-Aryans and it was promulgated with a relentless rigour that crushed the very soul of the aborigines. The conquerors claimed to belong to the gods and to call themselves *Āryas* or the race of the revered while the conquered were to know themselves as *Dāsas* or slaves and the race of *Asuras* and *Dasyus* or demons and robbers. The conquered were dubbed as *Śūdras* and given to understand that they were born to serve<sup>1</sup> their overlords and easily reach heaven after death by their sheer merit of having served them as gods. Gradually the self-condemned Sudras served their lords<sup>2</sup> with the passion of devotees and hang about their worshipful feet with the serene conscience of fulfilling the best in

1 But nemesis was not slow to overtake the Aryans. Time came when the proud Brahmans neglected and forgot their Vedas, and became lost in the religion of the *Puranas* which were composed by and meant for the despised Sudras.

2 The *Dharmasastras*—vide, K. P. Jayaswal, *Manu and Yajñavalkya*, p. 170—would give them no other work than the duties of slaves. The *Arthasastra* of *Kautilya*—Bk. I, *vidya-samuddesah*, P. 8.—however, records that they could learn economics (*Vartta*) and follow the professions of artisans and bards (*Karu-Kusilavakarma*).



their life. Freud was not living then but inferiority complex was. Thus although they had a civilization not to be pooh-poohed and although they created occasional tumult by some of their own deities usurping influential seats in the pantheon of Vedic gods or by some of their own customs cutting a clear way into the circle of Brāhmaṇic traditions, the pre-Aryan natives dwelt in perpetual dishonour in their own land. They were hypnotised into a belief of irredeemable inferiority. Before long they came to feel like shedding tears of piety while listening to the tales of their devotion to Aryan overlords. Ekalavya, the Niṣāda prince <sup>1</sup> could do no better than worshipping the image of Brahmin Droṇa for acquiring rare skill in darting arrows. When the preceptor in person, in order to prevent him using his self-taught lessons, appeared to demand his finger, the prince offered it with ceremonious reverence. This was slave mentality elevated to *Bhakti* cult.

#### REACTION OF UNHEALTHY DOMINATION

Nemesis did not fail to pay its inevitable visit. Boastfulness took away their mental equilibrium ; hatred dissipated their capacity for organization. Their strength declined and they crumbled down

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1 Sister Nivedita and A. Coomarswamy—Myths of the Hindus and Buddhists, pp. 122-25.

under the enormous weight of their own demoralisation. The newly generated power of Islam made the most of the situation. What happened then? History repeated itself. Those who coined the graceful expressions—*rākshasas*, *dasyus* *dāsas*, and *asuras* <sup>1</sup> in their turn, won the fine appellation of *kafir* i.e. a person guilty of *kufir* which means covering up the truth of God. This single word conveyed the whole range of feelings with which the Musalman used to greet the Hindus. To call one by any of these terms is to call one names. But that is the psychology of victors always, notwithstanding all what religion offers to say. And the defeated Hindus looked for solace in a queer spirit of self-laudation—the last resource of a proud and conservative mind. While lamenting on the wrong attitude taken by both sides, Al 'Biruni notices about the Hindus :

“All their fanaticism is directed against those

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1 *Rakshasa*—R. V., i, 133, 5 ; *nirukta*, iv, 18. *Dasyu*—R. V., x, 49, 7 ; *Nirukta*, iii, 89. *Dasa*—R. V., iv, 20, 4 ; *Nirukta*, ii, 17. *Asuras* had a confusing speech—Sp. Br. iii, 2, 1, 23—and used to yell like dogs.—R. V., i, 182. 4. They were originally all names of primitive tribes of India. Latterly, removed from the historical background, legend and rhetoric combined to render them terms of character. The *Yavana* was a much later emigrant tribe which was at one time—see, K. P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity*, pp. 147—48.—absorbed into *Brahmanism* and formed a degraded caste.

who do not belong to them—against all foreigners. They call them *mlechchha* i.e. impure, and forbid having any connection with them, be it by intermarriage or any other kind of relationship, or by sitting, eating and drinking with them, because thereby, they think, they would be polluted.”

#### ISLAM ONLY NOT AN EXCEPTION

It was similarly a reappearance of pre-human habits and a compulsion of primal instincts that led the youthful Islam to carry arms in their march over foreign lands and to let loose the agency of destruction that laughed in boisterous glee over the crash of other civilizations. This was simply obeying the general rule that “the expedient for settling differences that is right at hand, for it is the method of the organic world, is violence.”<sup>1</sup> In fact, wars and oppressions and subjugations trailed behind the progress of political domination. Adventurous representatives of royalty and ambitious doctors of divinity were in league. They both joined in raising the cry of religion which somehow happens to be the most stimulating drug in toning up the popular mind for unholy enthusiasm. Although the Qur’an

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1 Sumner and Keller—The Science of Society, Vol. I, p. 373.

itself did not desire that sort of *jihad*, the 'Traditions'<sup>1</sup> offered elaborate arguments in favour of conducting military operations for propagating Islam.<sup>2</sup> Even Timur, who might be said to have been absolutely innocent of spiritual passion and who directed his first attack against a Muslim Chief, tried to seek shelter in the excuse of a *jihad* :

"My object in the invasion of Hindustan is to lead an expedition against the infidels that, according to the law of Muhammad we may convert to the true faith the people of that country, and purify the land itself from the filth of infidelity and polytheism ; and that we may overthrow their temples and idols and become *ghazi's* and *mujahid's* before God."<sup>3</sup>

#### POLITICS WORKING BEHIND JIHAD

But the enthusiasts made too much of the idea of *jihad* which the Qur'an wanted firstly to mean 'exertion in the way of God,' and in a secondary sense, 'fighting in defence of the true faith.' *Ghazi's* and *Maulavi's* took no time in

1 Sabihu'l Bukhari and Sabihu Muslim.

2 Sell—The Faith of Islam, p. 360.—refers to the instructions laid down in the Hidya and the Kifya.

3 Tuzak-i-Timuri—E. H. I.

learning how to pervert its real spirit and utilise it in their combined interest. They both must have more heads to bow down to their authority and more hands to pay for their glories. This is the common bond that binds temporal and spiritual lords everywhere and in all times. The people too feeling the turmoil of a new life born of a new religion soon crossed the bounds of spiritual calm and fell into the vortex of uncouth excitement. This was only another, though very much misdirected, human expression of the passion for growing and acquiring which took its spark from a divine life-principle. It was largely a political inspiration which everywhere among all nations produce a talent for making enemies and getting better of them by virtue of a fresh life-force. Religion was there but far in the background of political hopes and plans. This was due to a natural process of misusing religion,<sup>1</sup> and Maulana<sup>2</sup> Muhammad Ali<sup>a</sup> goes rather out of the way in laying the whole blame on the "inventive brains of Christian missionaries." Undoubtedly, the missionaries had much to do with misrepresenting Muslim culture and religion. For instance, a very learned Bishop did not see the ridiculousness

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1 Sir S. Radhakrishnan—The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy, P. 9.

2 Qrn.—M.A. Ed.—ii, 190 footnote.

in saying: "To expect that Muhammadans will become truly civilised is to expect that they will cease to be Muhammadans." <sup>1</sup> But it must also be said that they were badly misled by the florid stories of Muslim chroniclers.

#### WRONG PUBLICITY IN MUSLIM CHRONICLES

In high pitched rhetoric these Muslim chroniclers preached false history. They were carried away by a radical spirit of propaganda and tried exultantly to help in the frank exploitation of religion by politics. Let us pick up one simple story :

"When this order became known to the Ghazis of Islam they drew their swords and put their prisoners to death. 10,00,000 infidels, impious idolators, were on that day slain. Maulana Nasiruddin Umar, a councillor and man of learning, who all in his

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1 J. Murray Mitchell—The Great Religions of India, p. 242. A better understanding of Islamic culture may, on the contrary, be read in the following observation: "Much has been written of Muslim fanaticism and intolerance towards Christians, but the noble words of Al-Ma'mun to the Bishop show that he is one of many unnoticed exceptions: "This is a court of justice and equity; none shall be wronged therein. So advance thy arguments and answer without fear, for there is none here who will not speak thee well.....Let everyone speak who has the wisdom to demonstrate the truth of his religion."—J. R. A. S., Centenary Supplement, p. 239.

life had never killed a sparrow, now in execution of my order, slew with his sword fifteen idolators, Hindus, who were his captives." <sup>1</sup>

**Instances** may be multiplied. But instead of doing it we had better refer to the observation of an acknowledged authority :

"The rhapsodies of Muslim historians in their accounts of the suppression of a rising or the capture of a fortress, of towns and villages burnt, of whole districts laid waste, of temples destroyed and idols overthrown, of hecatombs of 'misbelievers sent to hell,' or 'dispatched to their own place,' and of thousands of women and children enslaved, might delude us into the belief that the early Muslim occupation of Northern India was one prolonged holy war waged for the extirpation of idolatry and the propagation of Islam, had we not proof that this cannot have been the case. Mahmud the Iconoclast maintained a large corps of Hindu horse; his son Masud prohibited his Muslim officers from offending the religious susceptibilities of their Hindu comrades, employed the

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<sup>1</sup> *Mulfuzati-i-Timur*, E. H. I., vol. iii, p. 435.

Hindu Tilak for the suppression of the rebellion of the Muslim Ahmed Niyaltigin, approved of Tilak's mutilation of Muslims, and made him the equal of his Muslim nobles; Mu'izzud-din Muhammad allied himself with the Hindu raja of Jammu against Muslim Khusrav Malik of Lahore, and employed Hindu legends on his coinage; all Muslim rulers in India from Mahmud downwards accepted, when it suited them to do so, the allegiance of Hindu rulers and landlords, and confirmed them as vassals, in possession of their hereditary lands; and one of the pretexts of Timur's invasions of India at the end of the fourteenth century was the toleration of Hinduism. Neither the numbers nor the interests of the foreigners admitted of any other course."<sup>1</sup>

In fact, Islamic invaders did not and could not contemplate extinction of Hindu race and religion. Such a course would cost them all that was likely to be gained less ambitiously though chroniclers would grow warm in advocating this scheme. Curiously the name of Amir Khasru had been sought to express a kind of effusion altogether unusual of him :

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1 C. H. I., vol. iii, pp. 88-89.



“Strong men of Hind have been trodden under foot, and all are ready to pay tribute. Islam is triumphant, idolatory is subdued. Had not the law granted exemption from death by the payment of poll-tax, the very name of Hind, root and branch, would have been extinguished.”<sup>1</sup>

But poet Khasru was a genuine admirer of the land and civilization of the Hindus. He is incapable of saying what he is alleged to have said in the above quotation. The following from the same chronicle left by the poet is more characteristic of him :

“They call Hindu black, and that is true enough, yet it is the largest country in the world. You should look on Hindustan as paradise.”<sup>2</sup>

#### THE CASE OF MAHMUD EXAMINED

Real historical spirit was absent in the Muslim chronicles. The accounts are outweighed by a love of story-telling. Let us consider, for instance, a narration of Mahmud's invasion :

“It is a well-authenticated fact that when Mahmud was about to destroy the idol (Somnath), a crowd of Brahmans represen-

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1 Ashika of Amir Khasru.

2 Ibid.

ted (to his nobles) that if he would desist from the mutilation they would pay several crores of gold coins into his treasury. This was agreed to by many of the nobles, who pointed out to Sultan that he could not obtain so much treasure by breaking the image, and that the proffered money would be very serviceable. Mahmud replied, 'I know this, but I desire that on the day of resurrection I should be summoned with the words, 'where is that Mahmud who broke the greatest of the heathen idols?' rather than by these : 'where is that Mahmud who sold the greatest of the idols to the infidels for gold ?' <sup>1</sup>

Now, the narration appears to be largely overdrawn in the interest of colouring political raids with a glow of religious romance. Mahmud's personal avarice, it is commonly believed, was the main spring of his massacres. He would never knock down a temple for its own sake. Firstly, what he cared for was booty ; secondly, he was prepared to do what would give him the best of a bargain ; thirdly, he went away happy with the spoils without waiting to preach. He can be easily credited to have developed a good instinct for reckoning possibilities. In

the case of Somnath he could feel that many times more wealth was stored therein than the price offered by priests. With that idea in the back of his mind, he could, as a resourceful leader of men, surely have recourse to any mode of appeal likely to rouse his army. That way innocent religion had been dragged in to awaken crude impulses of life.

#### HINDUISM NOT QUITE ABOVE REPROACH

Misconceived fervour of religion, however, was not a unique notoriety of those who managed to misinterpret *jihad* in order to destroy Hindu temples. Indeed, the history of the triangular struggle of Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam is not without interest and irony. Although Buddhist monuments at Bārhut were allowed to be erected during the Sunga rule,<sup>1</sup> it cannot be denied that the Aśvamedha ceremony of Pushyamitra emphatically declared the reinstallation of Brhāhmaṇic Laws which could not view without irritation the Aśokan Edicts

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1 Dr. H. C. Ray Chaudhuri—Political History of Ancient India, p. 245. While agreeing with Dr. Ray Choudhuri in the main, it is difficult to follow him in his wholesale refutation of Pandit Sastri's views in regard to the revival of Asvamedha as a ceremonial display against Buddhism. There is a world of difference between the State propaganda of Buddhistic *ahimsa* and a few and faint Vedantic notes of dissents which were drowned in the vehement and voluminous commandments for *pasukarmani* urged by the Vedas, the Brahmanas, the Dharmasutras and Dharmasastras.

prohibiting the slaughter of animals. Surely, the great Bauddha kings felt very kindly towards Brāhman. In the same way, the Hindu monarchy maintained a general 'non-interference and toleration of Buddhism and Jainism'.<sup>1</sup> Yet we cannot ignore that exchange of bad blood was not unknown. The Kushan and Śakan rule made use of Buddhism in the fight aggainst Hindu national and social system, and one of the early Kushans erased shrines dedicated to the Sacred Fire and replaced these with Buddhist temples.<sup>2</sup> We have a number of historical proofs<sup>3</sup> regarding the reality of the persecution of the Buddhists. One may rightly wonder at the rarity of these misdeeds but is wrong in conjecturing that only the caprices of individual kings were responsible for these outrages. Again, history as well as tradition do not support the view held in some quarters<sup>4</sup> that Muhammadan invaders only used 'fire and sword' in extirpating Bdddhists while Hindus simply employed sallies of witticisms and showers of annoying banter. Islamic oppressions were severe

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1 Prasanna Kumar Acharya—Indian Architecture according to Manasara Silpasastra, p. 194.

2 K. P. Jayaswal—History of India from 150 A. D. to 350 A. D., pp. 45-52.

3 Vincent A. Smith—The Early History of India, pp. 213-14.

4 J. A. S. B., No. 1, 1895—Buddhism in Bengal by Haraprasad Sastri.

no doubt. In Kāśī, we are told, the Mullahs utilised the *singhāsana* of Buddha as a pulpit.<sup>1</sup> In Magadha, in a wreckless pursuit of victory, Muhammadans massacred a whole host of Buddhist monks in peaceful occupation of religious services. It was so sad. But could they have any grudge against the Buddhists as such? The learned author of the view mentioned above himself admits: "It was impossible for them to destroy Buddhism all over the country. Then again, it is difficult to say that the conquerors could distinguish between Hinduism and Buddhism."<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, we cannot pass over the fact that "the disciples of Kumarila and Sankara, organised into military orders, constituted themselves the rabid defenders of orthodoxy on the ground of tradition and speculation."<sup>3</sup>

1 J. A. S. B., No. 2., 1866—Buddhist Monasteries and Temples by M. A. Sherring and Charles Horne.

2 Mahamahopadhyaya H. P. Sastri cited above; in course of this article, he continues to say: "The helpless Buddhists would naturally be inclined more to Muhammadanism, which has no restriction of food, etc., than to Hinduism, which imposes thousands of restrictions on every action of life." Rajendralal Mitra, however, in his paper on 'Beef in Ancient India', observes that beef-eating came to disfavour among Aryans owing to Buddhist influence.—J. A. S. B., No 2, 1872, pp. 174-96. So, the Buddhists would rather take to Brahmanism had they felt any such desire for relaxation in diet. Going over to Muhammadanism must be too long a leap.

3 A. Barth—Religions of India, pp. 135-6.

The conclusion forces itself on us that polemic heat easily overflowed into actions of savage cruelty though it could never be thorough and widespread. And we learn "that the leaders of parties did not scruple at times to compass their ends by the physical force mediation of some *rājā*, or by stirring up against their adversaries the passion of the mob."<sup>1</sup> Aggressive revival of Brāhmanism was received with favour among Hindus in general and was practised to the extent that fantastic stories were in circulation in regard to the fate of Buddhism. Reactionary conduct must have been ripening into a sort of tradition to be able to give currency to fables. For instance, one *Varmaśira* is alleged to have destroyed a Buddhist idol in Dakshinapatha by the potency of *mantras*.<sup>2</sup> Surely, traditions tell a lot in affairs about ancient India. Mādhava's *Śaṅkaravijaya* relates with gusto that Kumārila-bhatta and Śaṅkarāchārya had been implacable enemies of Bauddhas. The charge against Śaṅkara cannot stand. He was of amiable disposition and had no special mission against Bauddhas.<sup>3</sup> But

1 Ibid.

2 Dr. H. C. Ray—The Dynastic History of Northern India, p. 553.

3 For instance, in the Anandagiri edition of *Śaṅkaravijaya*, pp. 157-59, published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal, there is no suggestion of fierceness about Śaṅkara's method of overcoming opponents.

Kumārila certainly was a “great and dangerous Brāhmaṇa enemy of the Buddhists.”<sup>1</sup> Mādhava narrates that god Kārtikeya took a human birth in the person of Kumārila, “the object of whose descent was the extirpation of the *Saṅgatas*, and in consequence of whose miraculous victory over his heretical antagonists, prince Sudhanwa issued the fatal order to that effect: ‘The king thus commanded his attendants; let those who slay not, be slain, the old man amongst *Baṇḍiḥas* and the babe, from the bridge of Rama to the snowy mountains.’”<sup>2</sup> This mentality, however, was not strange to Brahmanic traditions. Ritualistic ceremonies to destroy enemies<sup>3</sup> were performed with relish and faith. Even the merciful Śrī Rāmachandra had or could be supposed to have fanaticism enough to permit himself to behead a Śūdra for practising Brāhmaṇic rites.<sup>4</sup>

#### WHAT HISTORY SAYS

Religion brings about an overflow of energy and

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1 A. C. Burnell—*Sambidhanabrahmana*, Introduction, p. vi.

2 H. H. Wilson—*Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, First Edition, Preface, pp. xv-xx.

3 *Aitareyabrahmana*, viii, 28.

4 This may have been an after-thought in the original *Ramayana*. But then, this reactionary attitude of Brahmanism was holding good in some periods of Indian history which formed the realistic background of this interpolation.

confidence. Some time after, politics steps in to utilise these resources, and at its instigation religion is made to supply all pretexts for oppression. In fact, religion alone, before getting united with the forceful stream of political upheaval, do not create any considerable disturbance. It may be remembered that Kabul and Kandahar<sup>1</sup> were Aryanised prior to the formation of *Āryāvarta*. Later on, the Indian religion of the Aryans<sup>2</sup> also were flowing back to these countries. Long afterwards, in a similar but much narrower and less pronounced way, an Islamic outflow came down from these places. Thus, earlier than the advent of the Ghaznavite army, there had been groups of Muslim colonists<sup>3</sup> in parts of Sindh, Gujrat, Kanoj, Kabul, Cashmere, Kathiawad, Malabar. Everywhere they had been doing good business and did not think of making any manner of noise on account of religious differences. Rather, these people fought under the banners of Hindu rājās against any invader even if he were a Musalman. There was intermarriage too. On the other hand, Jats and Meds<sup>4</sup> served in the army of Bin Quasim. They joined him because of

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1 Kaegi—The Rigveda, Introduction, p. 12.

2 Pargiter, The Ancient Indian Historical Tradition, pp. 264, 268.

3 Sulaiman Nadir—Arab aur Hind ke Taalluqat, p. 398.

4 Dr. Iswariprasad—History of Mediaeval India, p. 50.



severities inflicted on them by Hindu rājās.<sup>1</sup> He did not destroy any Hindu temple, and during these days intellectual interchange was zealously carried on for long. It was reserved for the Turk “to present the faith of the Arabian Prophet in a more terrible guise than it had worn when presented by the native Arabian.”<sup>2</sup> One has also to acknowledge that the Arabian rule, in the first century of its glory, proved a source of good to many nations, and was seldom “noticeably oppressive.”<sup>3</sup> Reference may here be made in passing that the career of Arabic culture was ruined after the sack of Bukhara, Baghdad and Samarquand by Jengiz Khan.<sup>4</sup>

#### WHAT THE QUR'AN SAYS

It, however, is left quite clear that, like every other religion, Islam does not directly encourage aggressive spirit. Rarely does it permit fighting on one's own initiative. Allah has been called “the Author of peace.”<sup>5</sup> Naturally, it cannot and does not approve

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1 Similarly, many Christians of Europe, as a result of oppressive domination by some sects among themselves, embraced Islam in great relief.—vide, T. W. Arnold, *The Preaching of Islam* p.p. 49-51. It may be compared that Lord Clive recruited in his army a large number of Pariahs of Madras.—vide, *Ency. Britannica*.

2 C. H. I., vol. iii, p. 10.

3 J. R. A. S., 1928, P. 504.

4 Sir Percy Sykes—*A History of Persia*, vol. ii, p. 98.

5 Qrn.—M.A. Ed.—p. 106—lix, 23.

fighting either for making converts or gaining kingdoms. It distinctly says : "Let not hatred of a people incite you not to act equitably ; act equitably—that is nearer to piety." <sup>1</sup> The Prophet was pained at the idea of coercion. He said : "And if your Lord had pleased, surely all those who are on the earth would have believed, all of them ; will you then force men till they become believers ?" <sup>2</sup> He even directed his followers to defend churches and synagogues just as they had to do in respect of mosques, and enjoined them to lay down their lives to protect the places held in veneration by other religions. <sup>3</sup> There is a commandment for fighting against those idolators <sup>4</sup> only who did not satisfy the terms of agreement. Lukewarm adherents of Islam, called 'hypocrites' on this account, often disobeyed treaty engagements.

1 Qrn.—M.A. Ed.—vi, v, 2, 8.

2 Qrn.—M.A. Ed.—xi, x, 10, 99.

3 Qrn.—M.A. Ed.—footnote to xxii, 40.

4 Qrn., ix, 4-6, It belongs to that single *Surah* which is without the usual heading—*Bi 'smi 'llahi r-Rahmi 'r-Rahim*—In the name Allah, the Benificent, the Merciful. The Qur'anic injunction in this verse to "kill those who join other deities with God...and lie in wait for them in every place of observation" may be compared to the Rigvedic prayer to Indra to "chase all our forces to every quarter ; subdue the tribes of Dasas to Arya.....yield up the godless bands that fight against us"—R, V., vi, 5, 2 & 9. The Qur'an in three other *Surahs*—ii, 216-18 ; iv, 76-9 ; viii, 39-42,—speaks in approval of fighting.

Aggressive measures were prescribed for them only while providing protection to any of them as soon as one would repentantly embrace Islam. It has been argued that this is "an illustration of how the spirit of inspiration subserved the political interests of the Prophet."<sup>1</sup> The remark, though largely true, is a little wide of the mark. It would be more precise to say that the commandment primarily arose out of a political provocation. Muslims probably thought they could be absolutely certain of treaties being fully observed if only the 'hypocrites', as they were called, would altogether become Muslims. Generally, however, fighting had religious sanction only in cases of self-defence.<sup>2</sup> And even in this we hear of so much judicious restriction. There is express warning that women, children, old men, monks, hermits and the entire civil population of towns and villages, who do not take any active part in warfare, were not to be subjected to any cruelty.<sup>3</sup>

#### MUSLIM FEELING OF SELF-COMPLACENCE

Yet the forces of his new religion produced in the

1 Wherry—A Comprehensive Commentary on the Qur'an, vol., ii, p. 279.

2 Qrn., ii, 190-91. Wherry observes that the Prophet's "morality in this respect may be defended on precisely the same ground that the morality of Moses and Joshua is defended by the Christian."—Comprehensive Commentary vol. i, p. 358.

3 Qrn.—M.A. Ed.—ii. 190., footnote.

Muslim an aggravated superiority complex. Naturally he started believing in a spiritual superiority over all races.<sup>1</sup> With a simple-minded persuasion, he always referred to this newly awakened consciousness. His idea may be represented in the following utterance :

“We Muslims, of course, stand entirely on the other side of the question, considering all men as equal, except in piety.”<sup>2</sup>

Leaving the questionable merit of the superiority itself and the grim method usually applied for appeasing this feeling, it has to be acknowledged that this was no pose but an honest belief. The grounds of this belief have only slender justification, but sincerity in the conviction saves it from being devoid of interest. His attitude in general has thus been analysed in regard to its central motive by a competent critic :

“Convinced that he is *the elect of God* (Moustafa), assured that his people is the one nation chosen among all others by divinity, the Musulman has the certitude of being the only one called to enjoy celestial rewards. And so, for those who do not

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1 Here again the average Muslims formed his notion contrary to the suggestions of the Qr'n. Vide, part i, ch. ii, sec, 16, verse 136 ; ch, ii, sec. 8, verse 62. —M. A. Ed.

2 A.-B. I.

think as he does,.....he feels a pity made up of contempt for their intellectual inferiority, of horror for their decadance, and of compassion for the frightful future of punishment that await him.”<sup>1</sup>

#### IN RELATION TO HINDU

This growing conviction of racial and religious supremacy was entertained in full measure in regard to Hindus. The Musalman did not deny their surpassing intellectual attainments. He learned with reverence their philosophy and science. He drew inspiration from their arts and architectures. In politics too<sup>2</sup> he became their pupil. He managed, however, to focuss all his might in outshining in religious faith and propaganda. He had a desire of wishing the Hindus well<sup>3</sup> by offering them his

1 Andre Servier—Islam and the Psychology of the Musulman, p. 242

2 “The Turkish and Afgan rulers borrowed their methods of administration from their Hindu predecessors.”—Dr. H. C. Ray, The Dynastic History of Northern India, p. xl.

3 From this anxiety arose a custom which in effect was unwholesome though the motive might have been simple enough. When a Hindu king or vassal brought valuable presents to the Sultan in the Durbar, the *Hajibs* shouted out—*Hadak Allah*—i. e. may God bring you to the right road. The reminder of inferiority not only marred the sweet mood for the occasion but also went far towards demoralising him to a degree much more than his due.

faith in one God and equality of men. There also he had nothing to show off academically. These two gifts were already possessed by them. But how could he find it out? Here he had good reason to misunderstand them. Hindus did not use these gifts which were kept away from their everyday life like holiday suits. Al 'Biruni and other erudite enquirers, and Sufi saints of course, easily discovered and readily proclaimed that the Hindus had this all-important knowledge of one God and of the complete oneness of His entire creation. Only the inquisitive section, however, might hunt about in old works on metaphysics. But the general mass judged from what could be visibly seen in practice. Consequently, amid all his cruel fightings to realize his political ambitions, the Muslim had a curiously soft and painful yearning that this message of delivery might be heard and accepted. An episode of Mahmud will explain :

“When Mahmud was gaining victories and demolishing idols in India, the Hindus said that Somanth was displeased with these idols, and that if he had been satisfied with them no one could have destroyed or injured them. When Mahmud heard this he resolved upon making a campaign to destroy this idol, believing that when the Hindus

would see their prayers and imprecations to be false and futile, they would embrace the faith.”<sup>1</sup>

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE MUSLIM PROGRESS IN INDIA

It may be noted that the Muslim invasion was set on foot when Hindu political life was wrecked in a mist of petty rivalries and Hindu religion was preoccupied in a jealous recovery of lost grounds from decadent Buddhism. The victories of Islam did not rouse much political competition in the mind of Hindus. On the contrary, these drove them away to a deeper retirement from practical politics. They made amends by a greater display of their own religious bigotry. *Varnāśrama* was developed with an uncompromising rigour, and, like gods in heaven unmindful of mortals, the superior Hindus were utterly callous<sup>2</sup> if lower castes were being drawn to the faith of Islam. In Bengal, which was

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1 Kamilut Tawarikh of Ibn Asir—E. H. I.

2 There was the practice of *Suddhi*, no doubt, as we learn it from the reports of Al ‘Biruni and the *Smritis* of Devala and his group.—See, Jolly, Hindu Law and Custom, p. 263 ; Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar, Calcutta Review, October, 1933. But it was rather conspicuous for rarity. At the same time, it should be observed that the present *Suddhi* movement, like its counter movement of *Tabligh*, has been mainly inspired by political, and not social or religious, considerations.

principally a Buddhist region,<sup>1</sup> the common herd were generally neglected by Brāhmanic Hinduism. The masses were thus free to give ready response to the message of Islam which took over the task of Buddhism in a way and eventually yielded to *Vaiṣṇavism*. All over India Islam influenced the growth of a host of religious reforms that refused to recognise caste orders and many other invidious distinctions. The basic character of these was Hinduism, for Hindus had very little to learn in technique. They had ample abstract intellectual capacity. What they wanted badly was life. And Islam's pre-eminent gift was to bring about a real stir of life.

#### THE VOICE OF CULTURE REASSERTS

And Islam's part in real spiritual contribution to India was played by the Sufists. There had been quite a large number of them in the days of early Muslim occupation and expansion in India. They exerted much modifying influence on the fanaticism of many Islamic followers and realistic influence in bringing out Hindu *Bhakti* cult from theoretic indulgence. Amir Khasru was one of these Sufists. His work *Nusepeahr*—'the Nine Spheres'—"shows deep appreciation of the possible liaison between

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Jadunath Sarker—*India Through Ages*, p. 20.



Islam and Hinduism.”<sup>1</sup> The mutual appreciation of Sufi saints and Hindu mystics was a largely suggestive event. It proved a great formative power for securing friendship between the two races. Even the emperors and members of imperial household had high regards for saints and “such honour was shown to Hindus as well as to Muslims. This tolerance of spirit is probably anticipated, when Babur is depicted as being welcomed by Hindu sannyasis but it is true enough of a later generation, as shown by abundant historical evidence and frequent pictorial illustration.”<sup>2</sup> Common people too listened with equal devotion to Sufis and Sannyāsīs whose endeavours for the cause of righteousness and love mingled in an orchestra of harmony, and

‘Over the carnage rose prophetic a voice,  
Be not dishearten’d, affection shall solve the  
problems of humanity yet.’<sup>3</sup>

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1 Herbert H. Gowen—A History of Indian Literature, p. 479.

2 Sir T. W. Arnold—Painting in Islam, p. 114.

3 Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*; note, in place of ‘humanity’ the original reads ‘freedom’.

## THE MOVE AGAINST UNTOUCHABILITY

The Vedic people longed for the joy of living. And they sang the glory of gods who gave them happy homes, lovely lands and thrilling victories. A new life was in full play. It made ample room for many absurdities. But for dullness and stiffness it could not readily make any. So, instead of circumscribed *jātis* or castes, there were merely classes<sup>1</sup> with special activities. This elastic division of function was not yet worked up into a ceremonious institution. It was simply based on habits of life and levels of culture. Then came the period of spread and consolidation of the Aryan polity. It yielded a comparative leisure to be able to indulge in elaborate rituals. The literature of the time was taken up with explaining the beautiful hymns in the light of sacrificial litanies. The works are known as Brāhmaṇas. The task was done in chaotic confusion of philosophy and theology while intellectual fineness as well as

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1 Senart—Caste in India, pp. 117-35.

priestly professionalism were carried to an amazing brilliance and excess. The prerogative of the priestly caste became marked and its position much too magnified.<sup>1</sup> The spirit of exclusiveness soon outstepped the bounds of wholesome aristocracy—the aristocracy of culture. Discord started among Aryans themselves who all claimed to have descended from gods.<sup>2</sup> Brāhmaṇs wanted to monopolise all the excellence to themselves to the exclusion of Kshatriyas<sup>3</sup> even.

The conquered aborigines naturally fared still worse. Pride of descent and greed of power rapidly developed at the cost of grace and humanity. The members of the subject race, with whom there was a conspicuous ethnic contrast,<sup>4</sup> were treated as a miserable lot. At the same time they were dreaded lest their intimacy should soil the civilization of the proud Aryans. The race consciousness indicated in the Mantra-Brāhmaṇa texts began to be interpreted

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1 Tait. Sm., i, 7, 3, 1; Sp. Br., ii, 2, 2, 6.

2 Tait., Sm., vii, 1, 1, 4-5.

3 Thus, the Aitareya Br.—viii, 24-25—attaches no merit to sacrifices done directly by Kshatriyas.

4 Colour was taken to be the most palpable evidence of that contrast. There was just the colour (*varṇa*) prejudice which Indians now suffer so much in relation to Euramericans. The fair Aryans called the black non-Aryans: *Krishnayonee*—R. V., ii, 20, 7; *Krishnatvach*—iv, 16, 19. In later ages, however, there appeared varied shades of *varṇas* among Aryans themselves.—Sec. Br. Ak. Up., vi, 4, 14-18; Mbh., Asramavasika, 27.

as purely ritualistic conscience in the early Dharma-sūtras. But still, the Āpastambiya Sūtra<sup>1</sup> sanctions, under certain conditions, taking food prepared by Śūdras who could not have anything more than a patronising familiarity. The ceremonial purity about food, however, was prescribed for *Snātaka Brāhmaṇs* particularly.

The famous Puruṣa Sūkta<sup>2</sup> is said to have furnished the earliest evidence in regard to the existence of four castes. But doctors differ as to its being a R̥gvedic composition.<sup>3</sup> And even then, the *ṛc* in question points rather to the organic unity than any separateness, or, for the matter of

<sup>1</sup> Buhler places it in the 5th Century, B.C. Apastamba—S. B. E., p. 104—permits Sudras to prepare food for use in the Visve-deva ceremony. Gautama—ch. xvii.—permits taking food of a Sudra when there is no other means of living. Manu—ii, 223.—however, can permit taking unboiled rice merely and that again, for a day. Apastamba himself, in another passage—p. 67.—of the same text referred to above, enjoin that food of a Sudra cannot be eaten. And this spirit hardened more and more as time went on. Parasarabhasya quotes Adipurana to do away with even the few exception found in Gautama, xvii; Yama, xx; Manu, iv, 253; Yajna valkyu, *Snatakacraṭa prakarna*.

<sup>2</sup> R. V., x, 90, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Martin Haug calls it "the Magna Charta of Brahmanism. He is in agreement with Oldenberg, Geldner and Ludwig. But all other Indologists, Indian and foreign, particularly Zimmer and Muir, are fully convinced that it is a much later interpolation.

that, any suggestion of competitive merit among the four castes. In fact, the Vedas carry us back to the good old days when people were much too full of life to have any leisure to waste energies in petty dogmas of caste systems.

True it is that the caste rigours had to be further developed in the Smṛtis owing to pressure of local needs, among these being ignorance of the Vedas,<sup>1</sup> rage against the reign of Śūdra kings and the aggression of Buddhistic religion. That rigour has now long outgrown its justifications, and "it is time to say, with the reverence and tenderness due to the services rendered in the past, its work is over, and it must pass away."<sup>2</sup>

What surely is the central doctrine of our religion? Is it not man's oneness with God and consequent equality among humans? The Upaniṣads, the Brahmasūtra, the Gītā—all declare this beyond any shade of doubt. And the oldest of our *sāstras*, the Vedas too. They say in tranquil love for mankind:

"That I to all the people may address this  
salutary speech,

1 Already by the time of the Mimamsa it was not possible to make out the meanings of some parts of the Vedas. Jaimini felt the need of confessing it in Sutra. *avijneya*.

2 Dr. Beasant—Indian Review, October, 1913.

To priest and nobleman, Sudra and Arya, to one of our own kin and to the stranger...."<sup>1</sup>

It is a mighty conception of fraternity. Our modern idealism that "mankind throughout the world must be massed until it forms a single united harmonious tribe"<sup>2</sup> was already largely realized by the *ṛsis* of ancient India. But with the passing away of the period of creative force, this generous feeling was easily and naturally supplanted. When this energy of ennobling life took leave, the entire country became a tragic stage of sectional hatred. Yet so deep was planted this ancient culture that it could not be altogether rooted out.<sup>3</sup> Now and then, it sprang up, and the lovely green of its regenerated shoots flashed across the whole land. The Vedic idea of brotherhood of mankind was revived by Sāyanāchārya, born<sup>4</sup> at a time when Muhamadan arms were pressing on towards the South. This great commentator observed --*sarvam ekasmināt jātam*, all men are born of one stock.<sup>5</sup>

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1 Y. V., xxvi, 2.

2 Sir Arthur Keith - The Place of Prejudice in Modern Civilization, p. 45.

3 Its career, in a way, reminds us of the French saying : *Le roi est mort, vive le roi !* (The king is dead, long live the king !)

4 His voluminous Commentaries were written in the 14th Century A.D.

5 R. V., iii, 54, 9.

This grand idea of spiritual fellowship was never totally eclipsed. There has been a steady and practical recognition of this broad view of humanity from the days when Guru Nānak started his reforms. Chandidās, the *Sahajiyā* poet of Bengal, has only the other day said with absolute assurance that the highest truth is revealed in reverence to man as man.<sup>1</sup> To-day our great poets and thinkers are proclaiming the godliness of man and his universal religion.

Our Vedic and Upaniṣadic philosophers were rather ultra-modern in respect of loving the whole creation in one sweep. The ritualistic authorities, however, favoured an exclusive propaganda in behalf of Aryan imperialism. This racial prejudice encouraged hatred towards the Śūdras.<sup>2</sup> The Brāhmaṇas set the ball of hatred rolling. The Dharma-sūtras went on widening the implications. The Smṛtis that followed became yet more radical. One text,<sup>3</sup> for instance, prohibits taking rice from a

1 This is a distant but a distinct echo of Mbh. Santiparva, ch. 305—na manushyat sreshthatarang hi kinchit.

2 Compared to the Sudras, the Yavanas were given a higher status for they were Aryans, and so the Nātyasastras would have them painted fair on the stage.—See, K. P. Jayaswal, *Manu and Yajñavalkya*, P. 28. For homes and habits of races like Yavanas, Mlechchhas, etc., see, Prof. Benoy Kumar Sarkar—*The Positive Background of Hindu Society*, pp. 53—59.

3 *Apastamba Sm.*—viii. 10.

Śūdra and goes to the length of enjoining that a Brāhmaṇ who takes a Śūdra's rice forfeits the child born after this event in favour of the latter. An evil once indulged in grows implacable. So, it could not take a very long time for the incubation of the full-fledged untouchability creed which found no advocate among Vedic seers. Even the post-Vedic law-givers did not lose all sense of proportion. The group of Mānava Dharmaśāstras, however, set out on a deadly campaign of racial prejudice. <sup>1</sup>

A very brief enumeration of Brāhmaṇic ordinances against Śūdras and other members of the depressed class <sup>2</sup> may enable one to form some idea of the diabolical nature of the oppression—moral as well as physical.

- i. They are not to be seen by a Brāhmaṇ while taking meal, <sup>3</sup> or while doing a virtuous deed. <sup>4</sup>

1 Just as to-day Hindus and Muhammadans observe a number of reverse habits and practices, so the Dharmasastras maintained that things auspicious to a Brahman would prove injurious to Sudras. One very interesting example may here be referred to. Cowdung mixture was so sacred to Brahmins. But a Sudra having recourse to this expiatory mixture would suffer as if a Brahman had taken wine.—Atri Sm., 294. Parasara—vi, 48.—however, permits a Sudra to take this drink.

2 A fairly long list of *antyaja* or depressed classes is given in the Vyasa Sm., 10-12.

3 Manu, iii, 239 ; Parasara, vi, 64.

4 Manu, x, 51-52.



- ii. They are doomed to die if an Aryan happens to touch them. <sup>1</sup>
- iii. They are born expressly for slavery <sup>2</sup> and have no right to make any earnings, <sup>3</sup> while they may be justly dispossessed by the Aryan. <sup>4</sup>
- iv. They can neither learn nor hear nor say the Vedic *mantras*. <sup>5</sup>
- v. They cannot be given any guidance in material knowledge even, not to speak of any ritualistic performances. <sup>6</sup>
- vi. They must not be blessed by a Brāhmaṇ until he receives their salutations. <sup>7</sup>

Curious it is that round about the glorious doctrine of oneness, the clumsy texture of touch-me-not-ism had been suffered to be woven. Our Brahmasūtras simply serve as the recruiting ground for innocent theories while the dominion of practice is

1 Visnu Sm., V, 132. This is maximum punishment. Lighter punishments are also prescribed.

2 Apastamba, i, 1, 1, 7-8; Manu, viii, 413; Vasistha Sm., ii.

3 Manu, x, 129.

4 Ibid, viii, 417; x, 96.

5 Vaysa Sm., Srimad Bhagvat—practically, all Smritis and Puranas frequently refer to this prohibition. For instance, see, Parasara, i, 64; Gautama Sm. xii; Usanah Sm., iii, 65.

6 Manu, iv, 80; Yama Sm., 30.

7 Angirah Sm., i, 50.

governed by the Dharmasūtras. A devotee is meditating over the great idea of all creation being made of God<sup>1</sup> or of seeing Him in every creature.<sup>2</sup> Just then he happens to look at a so-called untouchable. All of a sudden he becomes frantically agitated. A profound anxiety to save his alleged purity overcomes him. His eye-brows take an uncouth curvature. A fire leaps out from his irritated eyes, fear-stricken though. There is no length to which he is not prepared to go in order to keep off the fancied pollution. Kindness, charity, mercy and other emotions that should have natural play between man and man are utterly lost sight of. Yet he always lays the flattering unction to his soul that he is a wonderfully pious man. And even so it seems to that unfortunate untouchable who moves away with a conscience of having sinned !

Whence does this dogma of untouchability come? Whatever the redoubtable doctors of divinity may have to say as regards the historic aspect of that institution or of its supposed origin in the laws of sanitation and eugenics, there is little use for it now. Justification is also advanced in another line. Practitioners of spiritualism perceive that minute invisible

1 Chnd. Up., iii, 14, 1—*sarvaṅ khalvidaṅ Brahma*.

2 Gita, vi, 30.—*Yo maṅ paśyati sarvatra sarvaṅcha maṅi paśyati*.

particles emanate from body, and conclude that the touch of a Śūdra must be avoided as the lower quality of their emanations is sure to affect a Brāhman. Yet, untouchability as an article of faith is certainly a preposterous exaggeration of the element of truth which this piece of occult science may contain. We have had enough of mediaevalism. Neither the Sanātānists' puritanic zeal nor their melancholy love of illusive metaphysics can appeal to modern humanity or even reasonableness. That this dogma obtains among a people owning the richest philosophy is a colossal tragedy. That we have now to argue a Hindu into such an obvious truth is an indication of our utter demoralisation. Howevermuch the theologians contest, their views do not deserve any serious attention. Swami Vivekananda<sup>1</sup> was indignant that for centuries people could go on "discussing whether I may touch you or you touch me, and what is the penance for this touching!" It is high time that Hinduism must be harmonised with humanity. The camouflage of robbing human rights by religious vagaries is weak and wicked. A little light of common-sense,—and these dusky dogmas are bound to vanish among shining realities of a nobler life.

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1 The Work Before Us—Lecture delivered at Triplicane. Cf. M. K. Gandhi—Young India Oct. '27, 1920.

Time was when Indo-Aryans, having of course no claim to perfection, knew and lived such a noble life. And much of its best—by far the greater part of it—was surely due to the energy and freshness of Brāhmaṇic thought. It was indeed a huge contribution that the Brāhmaṇs made by their love of living truth and neglect of punctilious purity. Their great philosophies challenge one another in striving for the truth and in clearing the mind of cant and convention. And in practical politics they had always championed the struggle against alien rulers and maintained their own ancient culture. For a very long period from the 2nd century B. C. Brāhmaṇism was largely overshadowed by Buddhism.<sup>1</sup> But latterly the association with Scythians prejudiced the country against Buddhism and proved to be one of the most important causes for its disappearance from the native land. And the Bhāra Śivas and the Guptas, in overthrowing the Scythian domination, were inspired by the nationalist<sup>2</sup> spirit of Brāhmaṇism.

Unfortunately a devolution set in as it everywhere does. The Paurāṇic masters readily incorporated,<sup>3</sup> in

1 Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar—J. B. R. A. S., 1901.

2 Medhatithi on Manu—ii, 22.

3 In Islam it is found that "the Prophet recognised the existence of heathen gods, but classed them among the demons."—Edward Westermarck, *Pagan Survivals in Mohammedan Civilisation*, p. 12.

the being of their god-heads, vast resources of worshipping traditions of the aborigines and untouchables. The Brāhmanic authorities took extraordinary care to protect all their usurpations and ignore all obligations. They had recourse to rigorous methods of suppression in fear that the aboriginal contributors might claim an 'increasing association'. The Paurāṇic gods came to fill in the vacancies left by the retiring living gods of the Vedas. These new arrivals, whom worshippers invest with life by *mantras*, had to assume a mortal dread of free air. Temples were requisitioned. Comfortably secluded in those dim enclosures, they were inclined to catch illness if doors were to be wide open. And the untouchables were denied going near them—no matter if they had largely contributed to the making of these deities !

Now, what is to be done? Will the gods undergo a revolution and a drastic revision? That was how they themselves got in. Or should a social reform take place? Who knows? Yet, in our liking for constitutional and gradual trend of things, we hope for the latter. Anyway, come out our gods and meet *all* our people.

It is not a new cry. But Mahatma Gandhi has, by his peculiar appeal of mixed politics and religion, helped it to reach the masses in a manner not known

before. His self-criticism is severe, his method singular, his effort sincere. His mighty mind broke into a mournful announcement: "I would far rather that Hinduism died than that untouchability lived."<sup>1</sup> He religiously opposed communal electorate and claimed: "Those who speak of political right of untouchables do not know India and do not know how Indian society is to-day constructed."<sup>2</sup> Yet the depressed classes proved to be "fighting classes";<sup>3</sup> and the great leader himself proved to have little sense of the realities of the situation in England and in India. The result was the formation of the Minorities Pact under the shade of his uncompromising idealism. The Premier's Communal Decision at length created another stage of struggle which Mahatmaji conducted in a way that is his own. This time the result was the Poona Pact. And curiously enough, separate registers and reservations, which he so stubbornly resisted at London, were now agreed upon by him in no less objectionable form. Moreover, the whole affair has had a not altogether unavoidable reaction on the so-called traditional religion.

Religion, to-day, as we see, is mobilising forces for national disruption and moral perversity. It is

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1. Speech in the Minority Committee, R. T. C.

2. Ibid.

3. An expression used by Sir N. N. Sircar in course of examining evidences before the J. P. C.

awfully lamentable but a fact. We have got to overcome it. And it can be overcome by realising a liberal spirit of humanity. Thus alone can untouchability retreat in a nice manner. But we must make sure that we want it to go merely because it is a monstrous evil in itself. Another kind of crude interest may be lurking and should be guarded against. A few of us may have been inclined to fight it with a conscious, a few again with a subconscious, idea of stopping the course of inter-social disunion among Hindus, only with a view to secure a more effective communal strength. No: let us not look for enthusiasm in political considerations of any kind. Let us war on untouchability for its own sake. Let us seek animation only in the higher ideals of social perfection and ethical excellence. We associate ourselves with those superb lovers of our country who are mortified at this misery of the great Hindu civilization. We have no other end in view, and we emphatically declare that to profess untouchability is a treason to culture.

## SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES :

### A

The theory about the Phœnician origin of the Aryan alphabet\* was started by Buehler and Weber. This is the generally accepted view.<sup>1</sup> Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar<sup>2</sup> has opposed it with considerable vigour and convincing judgment. He disproves any Semetic origin of the *Brāhmī lipi* which appears to have a pre-historic source and is not likely to be later than 3000 B. C. While regarding it as a product of the white pre-Semetic race, Rhys Davids<sup>3</sup> is inclined to think that it was imported by Dravidian traders. Sir John Marshall<sup>4</sup> seems to favour the view that the Indus script is the 'suggested ancestor of the Early Brahmi.' Prof. Langdon,<sup>5</sup> however, is strongly of opinion that it is a "survival of the early pictographic system of the Indus Valley", and further suggests that "the Babylonians borrowed the Sumerian ideographic and syllabic script for writing their Semetic

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\* Referred to in p. 45, line 3. The following findings, however, do not affect our simple statement about the association of Phœnician and Indian traders who used to exchange a lot of mutually useful goods and good ideas.

1 Rapson—C. H. I., vol. i, p. 62. It is held that the Greeks borrowed alphabet from the Phœnicians.—H. R. Hall: Ancient History of Near East, p. 533.

2 Prof. D. R. Bhandarkar—The Origin of Indian Alphabet. See also his—Asoka, p. 198, and contribution to the Silver Jubilee Memorial volume of Sir Asutosh Mukherjee.

3 Buddhist India—pp. 116-17.

4 Mohenjo-daro and the Indus Civilization—Vol. i, p. 41.

5 Ibid—vol. ii, p. 427.



language and the same circumstance may have obtained in India." Dr. Hunter <sup>1</sup> has to add that the Hindus might have taken these signs either directly or any earlier race might have passed these on to them.

This brings us to a question of greater general importance. It is the analysis of the complex culture of pre-historic days. Recent researches in regard to the Indus civilization reveal so various and surprising similarities between the people of Mohenjo-daro and Mesopotamian regions that they require us to think of a more internal relationship than mere commercial intercourse. "The conclusion seems inevitable," observes Frankfort, <sup>2</sup> that an important element in the population of the two regions belonged to a common stock."

## B

In Iran and Turan the usual custom was to keep curled locks dangling down the shoulders. This playful manner of hair locks, as evident in Central Asian paintings, were also prevalent at about the same time in India. The Bāmiyān frescoes as well as the mural paintings of Ajanta show that it was the common coiffure in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. In the fashion of female headdress, a transition was at work from the age of the Bharhut monument to that of the Sānchi. Formerly, a cap or a kerchief was used to cover the top of the head while two long plaits of hair were left to play on the back.

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1 The Script of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, p. 17.

2 Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology for the year 1932, vol. vii : The Indus Civilization and the Near East, p. 11.

Latterly, the kerchief remained somewhat sideways in a kind of fanciful knot and from the head a garland hung down on the back overspreading the two plaits that were woven together in a thick curl.<sup>1</sup> From this further evolved the difference \* in style as noticeable at a much later date.

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1 J. R. A. S., 1931, p. 527: C. L. Fabri—The Two Notes on Indian Hairdress.

\* Referred to in p. 72, line 6.



## THE POET'S MESSAGE

Sj. Atulananda Chakrabarti is dedicating his pen for the cause of cultural fellowship in India. All those who work for this great cause carry my genuine sympathy and appreciation with them.

I take this opportunity of reminding my countrymen that when we have made religion real in our lives all differences between faith and faith vanish, and the one true way of converting others is to prove to them that spirit of truth which unites Hindus and Moslems in the common beauty of their daily life and love.

SANTINIKETAN,       )  
April 25, 1934       )

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

*Benares, 10-5-32.*

I have glanced through your type-script "Hindu-Muslim Fellowship of Thought." It shows a great deal of careful reading and a very laudable endeavour to bring out the similarities, or rather identities, between Islam and Vaidika Dharma in respect of vital religious beliefs. You have also useful things to say about the stimulating influence of the two cultures on each other. I hope the publication of your paper may lead to further research by others along the same lines . . . . .

DR. BHAGVAN DAS

*Calcutta, 6-9-32.*

. . . . The more the different religious communities in India become inclined to lay stress on the agreements in their religious beliefs instead of on their differences, which ought to be tolerated as comparatively external and less important, the greater will be their progress in enlightenment and civilization and the greater their solidarity as a united people able to make contributions to human idealism and welfare. As I believe Mr. Atulananda Chakrabarti's paper on Hindu-Muslim Fellowship of Thought will foster this mentality, it should be published. Its publication may encourage other

workers to carry on research along similar lines which would be beneficial and desirable.

RAMANANDA CHATTERJEE

DAILY HERALD

*Tuesday, January 3, 1933.*

Appreciative study of religious books rather than communal pacts will achieve permanent peace between Hindus and Musalmans. The following learned article [Hindu-Muslim Fellowship of Thought by Atulananda Chakrabarti] from the "Hindustan Review" might, therefore, be read with interest.

*Santiniketan, 31-7-33.*

When misguided zeal takes away clear vision and people turn foes where their best interests want them to remain friends, something broader than mere political compromises and far removed from immediate political propaganda seems to be utterly necessary. Deeper notes of sympathy must needs be sung. That alone can bring about a real change of heart.

In this respect Mr. Atulananda Chakrabarti's work on Cultural Fellowship aims at serving a great purpose, and I believe it will serve it very well. Evidently, Mr. Chakrabarti has made enormous

studies to be able to treat so many varieties of subjects, and, what is more, he has been quite capable of representing the ideal of cultural brotherhood between the Hindus and Musalmans.

AGA POURE-DAVOUD

(The Crown Poet of Persia)

*Calcutta, 30-12-33.*

..... Mr. A. Chakrabarti's book "Cultural Fellowship in India" is a thoughtful and sympathetic study of the Hindu-Muslim relations, and both communities should largely profit by it. I feel it is a valuable contribution to Indian nationalism.

MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD

*Patna, 5-1-34.*

Cultural Fellowship in India by Mr. Atulananda Chakrabarti is remarkable as a pioneering work. It only begins a line of noble meditation. But the beginning is splendid. The wealth of information and beauty of language are only surpassed by the author's sincerity of purpose. And this purpose—that of developing mutual reliance and understanding between the Hindus and Muslims—counts most in our life of to-day.

SIR SYED SULTAN AHMED, Kt.

*Bombay, 16-3-34.*

... I have gone through the proofs of his little book 'Cultural Fellowship,' and I really appreciate his fine effort. He has taken pains after studying the divine books of the two faiths and to prove that they might come together and live in happiness and make this land of ours worthy of its great traditions. Toleration and good-will are worth more than any pacts and political deals. This book is full of thought-provoking materials and the time is come when we might think seriously to solve this problem.

MAULANA SHAUKAT ALI

*Calcutta, 17-3-34.*

'Cultural Fellowship in India' by Mr. Atulananda Chakrabarti is a work of high purpose and great labour. He has admirably summed up the results of numerous researches in so far as they are concerned with the comprehensive examination of the culture contact between Hindus and Muslims. And, there is much that is original in matter, while the presentation of the theme as a whole is altogether attractive. One may have differences, but it will remain an important work on the subject.

Prof. D. R. BHANDARKAR



ALLAHABAD

19th April, 1934

... I have read your book with considerable interest and appreciation of the spirit which you have brought to bear on your task. I desire to congratulate you on the point of view which you have adopted. I entirely agree with you that the "Hindu-Muslim trouble is more a matter of mind than a fight over percentage."

From a cultural point of view—at any rate in Northern India—there was not long ago a great deal in common between the two communities and I should think there is still a great deal in common between the two. Unfortunately some 30 or 40 years ago we ourselves started denominational movements with the result that the two communities have been drifting more and more apart from each other. Political causes are at best secondary causes. I entirely endorse your plea for cultural fellowship and mutual understanding of each other's good points. ....

The Rt. Hon'ble SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU, Kt.



Recd. on... 18.6.34

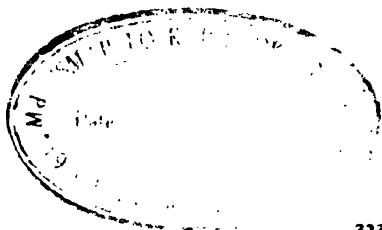
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